

**THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC FACTORS ON  
THE MILITARY OUTCOMES OF NATIONAL UNIFICATION:**

**A STUDY OF FOUR HISTORICAL CASES WITH LESSONS FOR  
KOREAN UNIFICATION**

BY

MICHAEL EDMONSTON

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The conclusions and opinions expressed in this document are those of the author. They do not reflect the official position of the US Government, Department of Defense, the United States Air Force, or Air University.



## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Major Michael A. Edmonston is a 2000 graduate of the USAF Academy, where he majored in Astronautical Engineering. In his 14-year career on active duty with the Air Force, he has served as a B-1B and MQ-1B pilot. Prior to SAASS, he completed a degree at the Naval Postgraduate School as part of the requirement to become a Regional Affairs Strategist (RAS) for Northeast Asia.



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## ABSTRACT

When two culturally similar states or territories unify into one new state, one side usually dominates conversations about the image and identity of the state. This thesis explores how external and domestic factors influence the dominant side's use of its military during and after unification to build national image and identity in four cases: Germany in 1990, Vietnam in 1975, Austria in 1955, and Hong Kong in 1997. The diversity of these cases within a broad unification framework is useful for establishing causal links between the external and domestic independent variables and two related dependent variables that measure the military outcome of unifications. These variables are the fate of the non-dominant or minor state's military, and the character of the unified state's armed forces. The cases show first that external powers can have a direct or indirect hand in making divided states whole again, and they may constrain a state's military choices. Second, cases show that the integration of the minor state's military during national unification can be a highly contentious issue, a shared assumption, or something that neither side considers. Even where it is a shared assumption, however, the conflicts that previously divided the unified state discourage a full-scale integration of forces. Nevertheless, the dominant state may assimilate a small percentage of the minor state's forces for a number of reasons. From these conclusions, it is possible to draw useful lessons for understanding the possible military outcomes of a future Korean unification in which South Korea is the dominant state, as well as for recommending US policy in influencing desirable military outcomes. This thesis argues that Germany's unification provides the most applicable lessons for a Korean unification after a North Korean reform or collapse. On the other hand, the unification of Vietnam offers lessons for South Korea if a war precedes unification. Germany's lessons are mostly positive, offering ways through which the United States and the ROK can preserve stability as unification unfolds. Vietnam's lessons are split: the conflict did not escalate into a war with China, but the United States and its South Vietnamese ally lost the war. While acknowledging several stark differences between the two Vietnams of 40 years ago and the two Koreas of today, this thesis uses both lessons to show how America and its Korean ally can posture for a military victory that brings stability to a unified peninsula and preserves security for the Northeast Asia region.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

What happens to the military forces of two states that unify? What conditions between the states shapes the fate of those forces as a new state emerges? The first consideration in answering these questions is that national unifications are rarely equal--one side in the process is usually more powerful than the other or plays the dominant role in unification by virtue of common agreement. The second consideration is that the armed forces of the concerned states will play some role in the unification process. That role may vary significantly depending on various factors, but the value of a state's military for security and its symbolic value as a source of identity draw it into the process.

Taken together, these two considerations suggest that one state's military will have more influence than the other state's armed forces as unification takes place. Moreover, political authorities guiding the unification process may deliberately use the military forces of the dominant state to create an image of the new state and shape society within it. As Joseph Stalin claimed, "everyone imposes his own social system as far as his army can reach."<sup>1</sup> For unifying states, this imposition may vary from outright conquest of the minor state's armed forces to a gradual assimilation of their members into a unified military. Or, the government may simply dismiss the military members of the minor state. This study is concerned with such outcomes and what causes them to be different.

These outcomes are worth investigating for a couple of reasons. First, they have the potential to affect internal and regional stability. Although the possible annexation of Ukraine by Russia is not a case for analysis in this paper, it provides one very recent example. Besides the regional security concerns that would arise if Ukraine lost its sovereignty, how Russia treats members of the Ukrainian military and uses its own military to enforce authority would affect relations between Kiev and Moscow and impact Western states' engagement with Russia.

This prospect leads to the second reason to investigate the military outcomes of unifications: the United States may have an interest in unifying states that justifies having

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), vii.



a policy tailored to dealing with such outcomes. Germany's unification in 1990 is a case in point. Recognizing the impact of a unified German military on stability in Western Europe, the United States organized talks among important powers in the region to help determine the character of that military.<sup>2</sup>

At least one potential future unification may drive the United States to seek a similar role. If Korea unifies, US commitment to stability on the Korean peninsula demands that it take some responsibility for what happens to the militaries of both sides. The possibility of such a case makes an investigation into the causes of the military outcomes of national unification worthwhile.

### **Case Study Criteria and Method**

History offers a plethora of national unification cases (see the Appendix), but the analysis of this study will be limited in a few ways. First, chronologically, the unification must have occurred since the end of World War II. This starting point brings the Cold War and superpower influence to bear on state unification and limits research to cases in which the fate of minor military forces is well documented. Second, the cases will concern divided political entities that share common or similar cultures and languages. Shared culture and language are constants that make other variables easier to distinguish in explaining the military outcome in the unified state. Third, the cases involve two states in close geographic proximity to one another.

Because these constants suggest a common origin, this study lends itself to cases in which political division is often temporary, the result either of external geopolitical factors, a civil war, or a combination of both. A caveat to these criteria is that other factors such as the duration of political separation and the character of the rivalry between the two states may cause culture and language between the two sides to diverge over time. This divergence then becomes a variable in the type of unification that occurs and the lens through which the dominant state views the minor state's military.

Apart from this caveat, the criteria for the analysis limit the number of variables under consideration and allow for a deeper examination of cases that are contextually

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<sup>2</sup> Frederick Zilian Jr., *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1999), 23-4.

similar. As Kenneth Waltz wrote concerning his theory of international politics, “The only interesting question is whether the category that classifies objects according to their common qualities is useful.”<sup>3</sup> If the cases are too diverse, they will cease to be useful for predicting future outcomes for the chosen category.

While analyzing similar cases at the contextual level is important for a valid conclusion about the fate of military forces in unification scenarios, doing so at the specific level is not. In fact, this study relies on John Stuart Mill’s method of difference for inducing theories. According to this method, a writer investigates instances with comparable contextual features but different values for the variables or inputs whose effects are in question.<sup>4</sup> Unification cases provide the context in this study; two primary input variables--the influence of external actors and the relationship between the unifying states—vary with the case. The outputs within each case correspond to the first two purposes of this study are twofold but related: the dominant state’s treatment of the minor state’s military and the character of the unified country’s armed forces in the aftermath of unification. These variables are difficult to quantify, but a proper theoretical framework will better clarify them.

### **General Theoretical framework**

The dynamic nature of national unification makes the historian’s challenge to “figure out how in a certain case human agency and structural factors contributed to an outcome” more difficult.<sup>5</sup> The former has less predictive ability, but without its proper place the latter will fail to provide a comprehensive examination for the event.

A structural framework for explaining the military outcomes of national unifications begins with a useful definition of the state. In their book *Bringing the State Back In*, Rueschemeyer and Evans define a state as “a set of organizations invested with

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<sup>3</sup> Kenneth N Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Long Grove, Ill.: Waveland Press, 2010), 96

<sup>4</sup> Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 23.

<sup>5</sup> Marc Trachtenberg, *The Craft of International History a Guide to Method* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 6-7.

the authority to make binding decisions for people and organizations juridically located in a particular territory and to implement these decisions using, if necessary, force.”<sup>6</sup> This definition is useful for describing a state during unification because it encompasses multiple actors and allows for different ways to achieve unification goals, depending on the circumstances. If unification takes place by force, the actors involved in the process are limited to the dominant state. If not, government organizations in the minor state may also have a voice in the process.

A framework in which to examine unification must, however, also allow for the impact of uncertainty and conflict in the activities of these organizations. These conditions exist even for peaceful unifications. There is usually a lack of procedural precedent for the unification of a state, and the state being assimilated may resist some efforts of the dominant state during the process.<sup>7</sup> Even ministries within the dominant state may compete in various ways as they work to consolidate state territory and integrate the people within it. Furthermore, because government organizations do not react well to instability and prefer incremental change, unification may challenge organizational abilities to chart a smooth transition.<sup>8</sup>

In view of these challenges, the influence of certain individuals within organizations may increase, lending credence to what Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow call the governmental politics model of governmental action. In their analysis of the Cuban Missile Crisis, these authors state that “inordinate uncertainty about what must be done, the necessity that something must be done, and the crucial consequences of whatever is done...force responsible citizens to become active players.”<sup>9</sup> The conditions described fit all but the most predictable cases of unification or assimilation. How government and political leaders use their influence in these cases can impact national stability. As one author wrote regarding the unification of Germany in 1990, it “could

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<sup>6</sup> Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Peter B. Evans, “The State and Economic Transformation: Toward an Analysis of the Conditions Underlying Effective Intervention,” in Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 46-47.

<sup>7</sup> Patrick Ireland, “Socialism, Unification Policy and the Rise of Racism in Eastern Germany,” *International Migration Review* 31, no. 3 (Autumn 1997), 554. Ireland’s piece particularly concerns the lack of precedent.

<sup>8</sup> Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd ed (New York: Longman, 1999), 180.

<sup>9</sup> Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, 302.

not have occurred without bloodshed but for the extraordinary statecraft of unusually competent men.”<sup>10</sup>

### **Theoretical Framework for the Military Dimension of Unification**

Considering the above views, the military aspect of unification may be particularly delicate, at least where a smooth transition is desired or external powers hold a vested interest in a state’s stability. Differences of opinion within and between governments on either side regarding the employment of the dominant state’s military or the fate of the minor state’s armed forces raise the potential for conflict. The blurring of domestic security and foreign defense as two states become one can further complicate the discussion.

How organizations and actors within the dominant state interact in determining the fate of the losing side’s military forces during unification and the character of the unified state’s military afterward is in many ways a wrangling over the identity of the state itself: how it perceives itself and how it wants others to perceive it. That identity is bound up in several ways with the state’s military. First, the military member—or more specifically, the soldier—is historically “the means by which the state comes into being.”<sup>11</sup> A newly unified state is again coming into being, and even if the dominant side does not use force to implement its decisions, it still uses the military member to project its desired image as it unifies new territory and population.<sup>12</sup>

Second, as Max Weber wrote, states claim a monopoly on legitimate violence.<sup>13</sup> The possible inclusion of military members from the minor state can threaten that monopoly. At the same time, a common culture and language—as well as any past political unity between the two sides—motivates some organizations and actors in the dominant state to include the minor state’s members in the common defense of the new country.

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<sup>10</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, 22.

<sup>11</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites*, 3. Bickford uses “soldier” instead of “military member” in this sentence, but his discussion of “The Military Imaginary” on the same page is broader.

<sup>12</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites*, 21.

<sup>13</sup> Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation,” Anthropological Research on the Contemporary website, <http://anthropos-lab.net/wp/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Weber-Politics-as-a-Vocation.pdf>.

Third, the military member is a projection of the state's image to other states.<sup>14</sup> If the winning state assimilates the losing military into its own armed forces, it projects an image of reform, inclusion, and cooperation. If it punishes the losing side's forces or simply dismisses all of them, it projects an image of rigidity, exclusion, and uniformity. Either way, the state must decide which image, or identity, is in its best interest.

Several factors influence the state's perception of that interest, and they are largely contained within the two aforementioned input variables: the influence of actors external to the state and the relationship between the two previously divided states. These two variables allow for analysis on two separate levels within the modern international system. In their article titled "Divided Nations and Reunification Strategies," Yung-Hwan Jo and Stephen Walker write that "it is important to distinguish between international and domestic approaches to reunification. Even though it appears obvious that a realistic strategy should explicitly encompass both approaches, many policy-makers in the past have emphasized international obstacles and underestimated domestic ones."<sup>15</sup> Because of the relationship between a state's identity and the composition of its military forces, the same can be said of whether and how the dominant state assimilates a minor state's military after unification. At the height of the Cold War, for example, international influence may have been stronger, relative to domestic factors, in how some dominant states treated the other side's armed forces following unification. Nevertheless, a civil war or independence movement within the state may override even superpower preferences during this period. Domestic factors also generally played a stronger role during periods when the tension between the United States and the Soviet Union was lower.<sup>16</sup>

The external variable includes both direct and indirect impacts. External actors impact the unifying states directly by pressuring them to make a decision or dictating their policy. For example, an external power may pressure the dominant state in unification to respect the human rights of the minor military force. Actors may also impact unifying states indirectly by interacting with each other. For example, an

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<sup>14</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites*, 21.

<sup>15</sup> Young-Hwan Jo and Stephen Walker, "Divided Nations and Reunification Strategies," *Journal of Peace Research* 9, no. 3 (1972), 247.

<sup>16</sup> Jo and Walker, "Divided Nations," 248-9.

improvement in relations between two states' respective patrons may discourage the minor state's patron from giving military support during its assimilation, allowing the dominant armed force more freedom regarding the fate of its rival's military.

More generally, external actors play a role in how the dominant state perceives itself and its rival during unification. These perceptions then translate into views on the minor state's military. The unification process converts these views into action much as a military conflict would do. As this study will discuss, outright military conflict has sometimes been the means through which the dominant state achieves unification.

The second variable, the relationship between the two states themselves, is also political in nature. Although economic and technological factors may also influence the dominant state's treatment of its rival's military and the character of the post-unification military, political factors are fundamental because states fight wars for political objectives. Put another way, the choice follows from Clausewitz' maxim that "war is a continuation of politics by other means."<sup>17</sup> Even if the unification of the state does not proceed immediately from a war, assimilation of a rival's military forces assumes they would support the unified state's prosecution of an armed conflict. The question of the assimilated members' loyalty to their new military in such a case is pertinent to this consideration, regardless of whether the states engaged in an armed conflict in the past.

Several factors other than past armed conflict also affect the political relationship between the two states, and hence how the dominant state will assimilate members of the minor state's military. These include the type of government in each state, the relationship of each military to that government, the interaction of the military and civilians on each side, and the structure and heritage of each armed force. On each side, these factors are interconnected, and they may be rooted in history that predates the division of the two states.

### **Study Structure**

The following chapter explores the meaning of unification, introduces a variety of cases in history, and explains the selection of four of them for this study: Germany in

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<sup>17</sup> Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, indexed (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 87.

1990, Vietnam in 1975, Austria in 1955, and China-Hong Kong in 1997. Germany and Vietnam are “firm” cases in that they meet the criteria for case study discussed above, the fate of the minor state’s military in each case is well-defined, and the geographic division between the two sides in unification is fairly simple. The cases of Austria and China-Hong Kong are “soft cases” because they lack one or more of these characteristics.

Chapters 3 and 4 provide an analysis of Germany and Vietnam, respectively. Each begins with a section on the historical background and context of the unification case, and it follows with an account of the two dependent variables: the fate of the minor military force and the character of the post-unification military force. The percentage of the minor military force that is assimilated into the unified force in each case is a quantitative measure for the first dependent variable, although it also includes other components such as the time required for assimilated members to adapt to a new military culture and the manner in which those members are reeducated. The second dependent variable considers whether and to what degree the post-unification force changes in size, structure, and mission set. Following accounts of the dependent variables in each chapter is an examination of how external and domestic political factors (the independent variables) influenced them. Each chapter concludes with a short section on the legacy the new military force has left on the state and its larger international community.

Chapter 5 is an analysis of both the Austria and China-Hong Kong cases of unification. They are contained in a single chapter because they were less significant for stability in their respective region of the world. Nevertheless, their unique circumstances also provide lessons for future unification scenarios.

Chapter 6 is a comparison and contrast among the four cases in terms of both independent and dependent variables and their underlying causes. Finally, Chapter 7 suggests lessons that each case may have for US involvement in the potential unification of Korea, and it touches on other potential cases that deserve further study.

### **Study Limitations and Sources**

There are at least three major limitations to the accuracy of this study. First, the input variables are interdependent; third party patrons influence the relationship between the two states and vice versa. Therefore, this study is nonlinear; it is not possible to trace



outcomes directly to a particular input variable. The most certain prediction that this study can make is that some combination of input variable values is likely to produce a certain outcome, based on the observed cases.

The second limitation is that while the method of difference aids in generating a more valid theory, it limits the number of strong historical cases available. Analyzing cases that demonstrate a large variance in input variables, however, helps to offset this weakness. For example, if one case reveals a lack of armed conflict during the period of political separation of the two states and the other case features the active use of military force up to the period of unification, it is easier to discern how the future of the inferior state's military "covaries" with this variable than if the cases exhibited similar histories of conflict.<sup>18</sup>

The third limitation is that this study does not give considerable attention to other independent variables such as relative economic conditions and technologies that may affect the fate of the losing side's military and the character of the unified armed forces. In three of the four cases—the superficiality of Austria's division makes it an exception—a significant difference existed between the nature of the two sides' economies, technology, or both. As this chapter has discussed, political considerations reduce the effects of these differences on the dependent variables. However, a fuller analysis of the military outcomes of national unifications might address the contributions of economic and technological factors.

The fourth limitation is the scarcity of primary sources for some cases. The lack of material in English together with the lack of accessibility are the primary reasons. If the dominant state in a case is a closed government such as in Vietnam, primary sources are very difficult to use.

The primary sources that are available consist largely of documents, debates, and interviews surrounding the cases. To the degree that the source's author recorded these interviews factually, they approximate a primary source, though authors' selective use of certain responses to questions to support their claims introduces some bias.

Most of the primary sources for the German case come from Jarausch and Gransow's *Uniting Germany: Documents and Debates, 1944-1993*. These sources

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<sup>18</sup> Van Evera, *Guide to Methods*, 25.



include Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Ten-Point Plan for German Unity, Lieutenant General Werner von Scheven's public announcement on the merger of the two German armies, and newspaper reports within and outside Germany regarding unification. The three most prevalent secondary sources for the study were Dale Herspring's *Requiem for an Army*, Frederick Zilian's *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, and Andrew Bickford's *Fallen Elites*. The first two sources explore the events and factors that led to the demise of East Germany's National People's Army (NVA) and its takeover by the West German *Bundeswehr*. The third source is an anthropological work that emphasizes the perspectives of former NVA members on German unification and its aftermath.

Primary sources for the Vietnam case include personal recollections contained in Lewis Sorley's book, *The Vietnam War: An Assessment by South Vietnam's Generals*, and North Vietnamese General Van Tien Dung's account of the military conquest of South Vietnam in his book, *Our Great Spring Victory*. Five other sources have received citation throughout Chapter 4. Robert K. Brigham's books *ARVN* and *Guerilla Diplomacy* examine the fate of South Vietnam's Army and the political role of the National Liberation Front (formerly the Vietcong) in the unification of the country, respectively. Vietnam expert Douglas Pike's *PAVN* chronicles the army that conquered the South and helped shape modern Vietnam. Andrew Wiest's *Vietnam's Forgotten Army* recounts the fate of the ARVN through the eyes of two of its former combat officers: one who defected to the PAVN and one who lived as its prisoner for 13 years. Finally, George Veith's *Black April* provides an updated account of the South's defeat, drawing upon recently released and translated material from North Vietnam and interviews with various former South Vietnamese citizens.

The Austrian State Treaty of 1955 is the chief primary source for the first half of Chapter 5, and James Jay Carafano's *Waltzing into the Cold War: The Struggle for Occupied Austria* is the most widely-cited secondary source. The personal account of the British garrison's last commander in Hong Kong—"Hong Kong: The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint"—is this study's chief primary source for the second half of Chapter 5. Neil and Jo Craig's *Black Watch, Red Dawn* is also a valuable source for Hong Kong's handover to China for its personal observations, interviews with local citizens, and regional and military historical accounts. Finally, Cohen and Zhao's *Hong*

*Kong under Chinese Rule* receives attention in this study for its analysis of the geopolitical implications of the handover.

Sources for the Korean case in Chapter 7 consist predominantly of journal articles, theses, and conference reports that seek to predict the geopolitical, inter-Korean political, and military outcomes of a potential unification scenario. The most quoted author in the chapter is Victor Cha, who has published books and articles on the Koreas and led conferences on Korean unification planning at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). Analysis in this study also draws from public documents belonging to South Korea's Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Unification. Recommendations for US policy in the event of Korean unification consider relevant guidance in the 2010 National Security Strategy.

Aside from sources specific to the case studies, this thesis draws upon analyses in international relations by Robert Jervis in his 1976 classic, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, and Robert Gilpin in *War and Change in World Politics*. Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow's *Essence of Decision*, an analysis of decision-making models for explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis, has also been useful in framing how organizations and political actors decide matters relating to national unification.

## Chapter 2

### State Unification in History and the Choice of Cases for Analysis

Depending on how one defines the unification of a state, the pool of available cases for study can be large or small, historically grand or limited, and conceptually broad or narrow. As the following paragraphs will show, how one bounds unification in history also affects how one conceives of it. This chapter seeks to give meaning to state unification in modern history, introduces a number of cases from history, and explains the rationale behind the choice of the four cases for this study.

### Defining a Pool from Which to Draw Unification Cases

The introduction of the modern state is a useful past historical boundary for a pool of unification cases because it introduces a familiar conceptual framework in which to analyze the process and its military outcomes. It is generally agreed that the modern state with its autonomy, territorial sovereignty, and jurisdictional authority—characteristics stated or implied by the definition of a state in Chapter 1—originated in the West with the Settlement of Westphalia in 1648. The treaties in the settlement reflected the preferences of the winning states of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) for “a legal status equal to the [Holy Roman] emperor,” who had previously exerted external control on state decisions, as well as “Roman notions of exclusive territorial and property rights.”<sup>1</sup> The “end state” of unification is therefore an entity with these characteristics.

This study supposes that such a state will continue to be the primary political unit in the world, extending the pool of available unification cases into the future and making the study's conclusions widely applicable. Although transnational organizations and globalization appear to be eroding the sovereignty of states today, state governments still dominate international decision-making processes, and many states actually use globalization trends to strengthen power.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars*, Princeton Studies in International History and Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 38-9.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Dicken, *Global Shift: Mapping the Changing Contours of the World Economy*, 6th ed (New York: Guilford Press, 2011), 171; Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, 4th ed (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 260-3.

The continued significance of unification movements to national identity in modern times also reinforces the importance of the state. The sense of euphoria for Germans following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the sensitivity of the Chinese to the Taiwan issue after over 60 years of separation provide two examples. Furthermore, even though political strife has plagued the small Arabian country of Yemen since its own unification in 1990, the event sparked widespread celebrations among crowds on both sides of the border that had divided the country.<sup>3</sup>

One caveat is that recent historical trends limit the available pool of unification cases. The collapse of empires and the end of colonialism in the last century, the overlaying of Cold War divisions onto national populations, and political fragmentation in the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse are three such trends.<sup>4</sup> Increased international approval for the sovereignty of ethnic groups within states—particularly groups that have been oppressed by a state or have become the victims of attempted genocide—is another such trend. The emergence of East Timor, South Sudan, and Kosovo are examples. As a result, the last several decades have featured disintegration more often than unification.

Nevertheless, there is still a large historical pool of cases because of the diverse ways unification can come about. For example, a definition of unification does not restrict the quantity or character of territories that unify. If unification is taken to mean “consolidation,” it suggests a minimum of two states or territories to start with but no maximum.<sup>5</sup> Other aspects left open to interpretation are the relative sizes or populations within unifying territories and the territories' relationship prior to unifications. With a time span of nearly 400 years and few constraints on definitions, there are a myriad of cases.

### **Cases of Unification in Modern History**

The appendix characterizes 11 unification cases, distinguishing them according to several categories: the number and type of territories unifying, the circumstances of their separation, territorial sizes and relative populations, and the means and occasion of their

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<sup>3</sup> Paul Dresch, *A History of Modern Yemen* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 183.

<sup>4</sup> Barraclough, *The Times Concise Atlas of World History*, 136-7, 150.

<sup>5</sup> William Morris, ed., *The American Heritage Dictionary*, 2nd college ed (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982), 1321. This dictionary defines the word *unify* as follows: “To make into a unit; consolidate.”

unification. The cases illustrate the variety that exist and were chosen somewhat randomly. The number of territories unifying varies from two in most cases to over a dozen for Italy. Type varies from autonomous regions and imperial territories (both contributed to a unified Italy) to post-war occupied zones and internationally-recognized modern states in the cases of Austria and Germany, respectively. The territories may have been separated for centuries or several generations, as they were on the Italian peninsula, in Poland, and for the Chinese Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macao. In the case of the United States, the two territories were only politically distinct for four years—and then only according to those who officially recognized the Confederate States of America.

Separation or division implies a time in the past during which territories had been together. This is true for all 11 cases, but in different ways. Some territories had been separated long enough that their past unity preceded the appearance of modern states. This is true of Italy and China: the former had been at the center of the Roman Empire and the latter was a civilization ruled by successive dynasties.

Other regions had never had the opportunity to become modern states, presumably because of their status as colonial possessions. This is true of Vietnam and, to some degree, Somalia. Tribal loyalties and the persistence of a self-help mentality for achieving justice have hampered effective government in Somalia, and there are indications the country may separate again.<sup>6</sup> Instability also continues to rise in unified Yemen, but its two sides had existed separately as modern states for decades after receiving independence from Great Britain and the Ottoman Empire, respectively.

Still other regions had always been under the sovereignty of one state or another for most of modern history. This is the case of Alsace-Lorraine, which had once been two separate regions. Alsace had officially become part of France after the Settlement at Westphalia, and the French had appointed governors over the Duchy of Lorraine since 1737. Even though many within the territories spoke German, they remained French until Prussia annexed most of Alsace and part of Lorraine in 1871 after their victory in

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<sup>6</sup> I. M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali: Nation and State in the Horn of Africa*, 4th ed, Eastern African Studies (Oxford : Hargeisa, Somaliland : Athens: James Currey ; Btec Books ; Ohio University Press, 2002), 11; *Somaliland Government Website*, accessed April 30, 2014, <http://somalilandgov.com/somaliland-geography/>.

the Franco-Prussian War.<sup>7</sup> The renamed region of Alsace-Lorraine reverted to France after Germany lost World War I, but Hitler secretly annexed the region upon his takeover of France in 1940. Since the rest of the world did not recognize the motion, the region easily reverted back to France the second time in 1945. It remains French today, though it has been divided into three distinct administrative zones.<sup>8</sup>

The Alsace-Lorraine case is on the unequal end of another way to differentiate unifications: relative territorial and population size. As Appendix A shows, the population and land area of the region are only a few percent those of France. Although there is no minimum ratio in unification, reattaching a small region to the country actually better describes assimilation or incorporation. These terms will sometimes be used to describe unequal unifications in this study, although there is a subtle distinction between the two terms: the former denotes cultural absorption while the latter connotes a political integration. Both may be taking place following unification, but assimilation generally less so considering that similar culture and language between the two unifying sides are two of the criteria for cases to analyze. Nevertheless, assimilation is a useful term to describe the inclusion of the minor state's military members into post-unification armed forces because of the psychological adjustments that those members must make.

The means and occasion of unification are the final two categories of the cases listed in Appendix A. The table reveals that the majority of unifications take place following a conflict, but not always directly or immediately. Poland had not existed as a country when World War I was fought, but its native leadership had a window of opportunity afterward to exploit three conditions: the defeat of Germany, the disintegration of Austria-Hungary, and the turmoil of the Russian Bolshevik Revolution. The Paris Peace Conference in 1918 gave legal backing to Poland's existence, but it had to fight several military campaigns between 1918 and 1921 to solidify its territory.<sup>9</sup> Austria's independence following several years of externally-enforced division is also a case of delayed post-conflict unification. Unlike Poland, however, its army was in no

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<sup>7</sup> Lucien Gallois, "Alsace-Lorraine and Europe," *Geographical Review*, Vol 6, no. 2 (August 1918), 98-9.

<sup>8</sup> "Alsace-Lorraine," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2014, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/17404/Alsace-Lorraine>.

<sup>9</sup> Mieczysław B. Biskupski, *The History of Poland*, The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2000), 60, 68-72.

position to fight its way to freedom from foreign control. Furthermore, its occupying powers were wartime victors rather than losers.

In other cases, unification did not proceed from a major conflict, but conflict sowed the seeds of nationalism that encouraged unity. This was the case in Somalia, where World War II stimulated “a new conception of Somali nationalism,” fostered “the nationalist aim of unifying the several Somali territories,” and provided “the conditions under which this aim could largely have been realized.”<sup>10</sup> Likewise, Vietnamese nationalism became most evident in the void left by a retreating Japan and a weak French presence at the end of World War II.

Colonial powers were slow to release their territories, however. The French did not wish to let go of their Indochina holdings, and the First Indochina War ensued as the Vietnamese saw their hopes for independence dashed. The British were more amenable to the independence of Somaliland, but they believed a gradual process of development and institutionalization was most conducive to its survival. In the end, Pan-Somali organizations anxious for the territory’s independence persuaded the British government to follow the lead of the Italians and allow Somalis in its territory to participate in electing a native president.<sup>11</sup>

In states that had greater control of their own governments, unification was still inseparable from the conclusion of a conflict. In the cases of Yemen and Germany, that conflict was the Cold War. Talk of unification in both Yemeni states had proceeded in “fits and starts” for decades, but the impending collapse of the Soviet Union helped remove obstacles to agreement on important political issues that had previously divided leaders from the North and South.<sup>12</sup> Germany’s story unfolded differently, but as a result of a related external trend. The Soviet Union’s reforms in the late 1980s removed from East Germany’s Communist leadership the support that they had long depended on, and the East German people took advantage of a weak government to remove the first obstacles to unification.

The reversions of Hong Kong and Macao to China are the only two cases in the table that are not tied in some way to an international conflict. The departure of the

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<sup>10</sup> Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali*, 116.

<sup>11</sup> Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali*, 148, 155, 163.

<sup>12</sup> Dresch, *A History of Modern Yemen*, 181, 209.



British from Hong Kong is to some a reminder of the European power's continued imperial decline, while to others it is a sign of China's rise.<sup>13</sup> From a legal standpoint, the handover proceeded from the termination of Britain's lease on the property. The British dictated some terms of the handover, while China dictated others. Portugal's relinquishment of Macao was less predictable, but the country agreed to the first step of the process—Chinese sovereignty over the territory—shortly after recognizing the PRC diplomatically in 1979. Portugal planned for a transition to Chinese administration of the territory by 2004, but China demanded that Portugal fully relinquish it before the year 2000.<sup>14</sup> The interactions in both cases make it clear that diplomatic negotiations rather than a background of military conflict dominated the handovers of Hong Kong and Macao. How symptomatic such territorial transfers are of future unifications and whether they indicate a decreasing utility for the role of force is a subject for another study.

### **Choosing Unification Cases for Analysis**

Regardless of the utility of the role of force in deciding state unification, one of the arguments of this study is that the military outcome of the process is highly symbolic for state image. As Chapter 1 discussed, a unified state will organize, train, and equip national military forces in accordance with how it perceives itself and how it wants others to perceive it. The dynamic nature of unification and the combination of external and domestic influence during the process complicate the military outcome, however.

To better understand how both factors contribute to the fate of the minor state's armed forces and the character of the post-unified military, it is important to choose cases that differ in their details. There are three ways to do this, the first of which is to vary the input variables. That is, the degree and type of external influence relative to domestic influence on military outcomes should vary among the cases so that it is easier to establish patterns of causality.

The second way is to choose cases that vary in some of the categories presented in Appendix A. For example, the cases listed reveal that unification does not always result

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<sup>13</sup> Warren I. Cohen and Li Zhao, eds., *Hong Kong under Chinese Rule: The Economic and Political Implications of Reversion* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1.

<sup>14</sup> Shiu-Hing Lo, "Aspects of Political Development in Macao," *The China Quarterly*, no. 120 (December 1989), 837.



from the consolidation of two independent states. They may have been territories of another country. Looking at cases that contain both types enriches a comparison of external and domestic influence in the military outcome of the unification process.

The third way to ensure a variety of cases is to vary the region of the cases. In this way, conclusions about the causality between independent and dependent variables is more likely to transcend cultural or regional factors.

At the same time, it is important to stipulate certain commonalities at the contextual level. Chapter 1 already stated these commonalities: the occurrence of unification since the end of World War II, a shared language and culture between the unifying sides, and geographic proximity. There is a rationale behind these criteria.

First, the time constraint has been chosen because there is much more available information about the military outcomes of unification for the post-World War II period than for earlier eras.

Second, shared language and culture add a stigma to the military outcome of unification that does not exist for a state composed of a variety of ethnic groups. The assumption is that shared culture will motivate incorporation of the minor state's armed forces in a unified military more than ethnic disparity would. Shared culture helps foster an "imagined political community"—a phrase that social scientist Benedict Anderson uses to distinguish a nation from a state.<sup>15</sup> In view of this assertion, if the dominant state elects not to incorporate at least some of a culturally similar minor state's military forces, then the factors in that decision show themselves particularly strong and easy to discern.

Third, geographic proximity is a criteria that simplifies the unification study. The presence of a common border characterizes most modern unification cases anyway. Exceptions would include states that incorporate far-removed islands or geographically separated regions under their jurisdiction, such as the Russian enclave between Poland and Lithuania on the Baltic Sea.<sup>16</sup>

The combined requirements for time of occurrence, shared language and culture, and geography limit the available pool, but there are at least two cases that not only fit

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<sup>15</sup> Benedict Anderson, "Imagined Communities," in *The Origins of Nationalism*, n.d., 48–59, <https://www2.bc.edu/marian-simion/.../0420anderson.pdf>, 49-50.

<sup>16</sup> "The Potsdam Declaration" (The Book Department, Army Information School, Carlisle Barracks, PA, May 1946), <http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/policy/1945/450802a.html>.

these categories well, but also exhibit different input variables within the larger unification context and come from seemingly opposite sides of the globe: the unification of Germany in 1990 and the unification of Vietnam in 1975.

### **The Unification of Germany in 1990**

Germany's unification in 1990 easily fits all three of the basic requirements. First, the date speaks for itself. Second, besides having been a state from 1871 to 1945, the territory that became Germany shared a common language and culture much farther back in history. According to H.G. Wells in his *Outline of History*, political divisions between the West and East halves of the Frankish dominion under Clovis (481-511) arose because the East—which includes large portions of modern western and central Germany--adhered to dialects of German while the West adopted a Latinized language. A more standard form of German replaced local dialects in the fourteenth century as written language became more common.<sup>17</sup>

Besides sharing a common language and culture, post-World War II Germany's division took place along a shared geographic line. The line originated with the end of World War II, when the Soviet Union and the Western allies formally divided the country into occupation zones. The Soviet zone, which became East Germany—officially the German Democratic Republic (GDR)—included the German states of Mecklenburg, Brandenburg, Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia, and Saxony. The German capital, Berlin, lay deep within the Soviet zone, but it was divided among the allies as well. The British, French, and US zones, which became West Germany—officially the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)—included the states of Bavaria, Baden-Wuerttemberg, Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland, North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein, and the city states of Bremen, Bremerhaven, and Hamburg. The onset of the Cold War as US-Soviet relations hardened left Germany divided along this line for over four decades. The fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989, was symbolic of the Cold War's end, and Germany's reunification paved the way for a more closely integrated Europe in the post-Cold War world.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> H. G. Wells, *The Outline of History*, 3rd ed. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1921), 611, 718.

<sup>18</sup> Barraclough, *The Times Concise Atlas of World History*, 136-7, 148.

Germany's unification is significant for this study for other reasons as well. First, as noted above, Germany experienced a reunification as a modern state. It had been a single state in the past, albeit under different forms of government and over varying territory. Now it was a single state once again.

Second, Germany's reunification was unplanned, rapid, and yet peaceful. Although West Germany's leaders had hoped for reunification, divergent social and political trends during decades of separation made reunification seem a remote possibility.<sup>19</sup> As Chapter 3 will detail, however, a combination of external and domestic pressures by the late 1980s—including the recollection of Germany's past unity--opened the flood gates to a quick yet peaceful integration of East Germany into a greater German state. The chapter will explain how these pressures—strong but indirect pressure from the Soviet Union for East Germany to reform politically and moderate but direct pressure from West Germany for unification once it appeared imminent –influenced the fate of the East German Army and the character and composition of a unified German military.

### **The Unification of Vietnam in 1975**

Like Germany's division, Vietnam's emerged following an armed conflict. At the end of the First Indochina War in 1954, delegations from France and the Viet Minh agreed to divide the country along the 17<sup>th</sup> parallel, which roughly adhered to French administrative divisions and ancient ethno-cultural fault lines.<sup>20</sup> The French agreed to move their forces south of the line, and the Viet Minh promised to withdraw north of it.<sup>21</sup> The agreement proposed that the line exist only until national elections were held. However, North Vietnam had transformed into a Communist state and South Vietnam's government refused to participate in an open vote because it believed the North would seek to dominate the process. As a result, elections were postponed indefinitely.<sup>22</sup> The de facto line persisted throughout the Second Indochina War even as a Communist

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<sup>19</sup> A. James McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 22, 31, 52, 56, 104.

<sup>20</sup> "WHKMLA Historical Atlas: Vietnam," February 8, 2005, <http://www.zum.de/whkmla/histatlas/seasia/haxvietnam.html>.

<sup>21</sup> Windrow, *The Last Valley*, 637.

<sup>22</sup> David C. Whitney, *Two Dynamic Decades: A Pictorial History of the Space Age Generation*, ed. Thomas C. Jones (Chicago: J. C. Ferguson Publishing Company, 1967), 117, 132.

military front grew up in the South. North Vietnam had always disputed the line, and its military invasion in 1975 erased it once and for all.

Like Germany, Vietnam also possessed a shared language and culture. Although it had not been a modern nation state prior to unification, the Vietnamese people “are thought to have formed a distinct ethnic group by AD 200 at latest.”<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, “a Vietnamese national consciousness and language” developed during Chinese rule between 200 BC and AD 800.<sup>24</sup>

Vietnam is also a useful choice because it presents input values for the study that are clearly different from Germany’s, making possible a better explanatory model for differing values of the dependent variables. First, violence and decades of active planning for unification by one side (the North Vietnamese) distinguish the case from Germany. Second, the relationships among the United States, the Soviet Union, and China on the international level are unique.

Although détente marked exchanges between the United States and both the Soviet Union and China, tension characterized the relationship between the latter two. The United States was able to exploit this tension to extricate itself from South Vietnam honorably. Subsequently, the US departure proved indirectly responsible for the fall of South Vietnam, while subtle Soviet support for North Vietnam continued in the form of military materials. Chapter 4 will detail how such indirect external factors combined with North Vietnam’s use of military force to defeat the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) and shape the character of the PAVN under a unified state.

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<sup>23</sup> Martin Windrow, *The Last Valley: Dien Bien Phu and the French Defeat in Vietnam* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2006), 69.

<sup>24</sup> Windrow, *The Last Valley*, 69.

## **Firm Cases and Soft Cases**

In this study, Germany and Vietnam are “firm cases” for analysis. In each case, the existence of a military force on each side affords a structured examination of causation between independent variables (external and internal political factors) and dependent variables (the fate of the losing military and the character of the winning or unified military). Furthermore, for these cases “unification” most accurately describes the process in which the two states become one.

Aside from the firm cases of Germany and Vietnam, there are “softer” cases in which the fate of the losing military is more of an undefined question and geographical division is more complex, but which still generally meet the three criteria for win-loss unification in this study. They may also shed new light on how reformed states or states with new geographic territory chose the winners and losers when they create a new military force or reform an existing one. Two of these soft cases are the independence of Austria in 1955 and the assimilation of Hong Kong into China in 1997.

### **The Independence of Austria in 1955**

Like Germany, Austria had been a modern state prior to its division, although only since 1919 within its current borders. Under Hitler, Germany assimilated Austria in the Anschluss of 1938. Allied troops liberated Austria in 1945, but concerns that it might become “a fertile breeding ground for the development of Nazi pan-Germanism” led France, Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union to partition the state into zones of occupation.<sup>25</sup> After ten years of deliberations with the other three occupying powers, the Soviet Union finally agreed that Austria would become independent on the condition that it be a neutral country. The four occupying powers convened shortly afterward to sign the Austrian State Treaty that granted the country its independence.<sup>26</sup>

Like Germany and Vietnam, Austria meets the common language and culture criteria: The majority of its citizens speak German and generally share a cultural heritage

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<sup>25</sup> James Jay Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War: The Struggle for Occupied Austria*, Texas A & M University Military History Series 81 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 26.

<sup>26</sup> Whitney, *Two Dynamic Decades: A Pictorial History of the Space Age Generation*, 103.

dating back to Austria's position as the center of power for the Catholic, German-speaking Habsburgs.<sup>27</sup>

Austria's geographic division, however, is more complex for two reasons. First, four zones rather than two characterized the country during its ten years of division. Although the Soviets and the three Western allies initially divided Germany into four zones as well, Austria's remained separate up until 1955. On the other hand, in 1949 Germany's Western zones unified into West Germany and the Soviet zone became East Germany.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, for this study it is possible to simplify Austria into two zones: one occupied by the Soviet Union and the other occupied by the Western allies. Even though the Western allies followed slightly different policies within their zones, they all favored an independent Austria and took strong political and military stances against the Soviet Union, particularly as the Cold War hardened.<sup>29</sup> Inversely, the Soviet Union grouped the United States, Britain, and France together as "the capitalist West" when it argued against political and military policies in the other three zones.<sup>30</sup>

The second reason Austria's division is more complex than that of Germany and Vietnam is inherent in the first reason: Austria was occupied, not self-governed. Austria did have its own administration from 1945 onward—the Soviets had appointed a chancellor and the other Allies belatedly accepted his government—but its decisions required the approval of the occupying powers before they could be carried out.<sup>31</sup> This degree of control is higher than what either superpower exerted in the government of Germany or Vietnam.

These distinctions in the Austrian case first require modification in the language used to describe its unification. Austria did not unify so much as become independent. Therefore, this term is generally used in Chapter 5.

Second and most applicable to this study, although Austria did have a "losing" military following World War Two—its manpower contribution to the German

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<sup>27</sup> Wells, *The Outline of History*, 783.

<sup>28</sup> Whitney, *Two Dynamic Decades: A Pictorial History of the Space Age Generation*, 103.

<sup>29</sup> William Lloyd Stearman, *The Soviet Union and the Occupation of Austria* (Bonn, Germany: Siegler and Company, n.d.), 22, 27, 94; Kurt Waldheim, *The Austrian Example*, trans. Ewald Osers (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1973), 94.

<sup>30</sup> Stearman, *The Soviet Union and the Occupation of Austria*, 86, 97.

<sup>31</sup> Stearman, *The Soviet Union and the Occupation of Austria*, 21-2.

Wehrmacht that fought under the Third Reich—the occupying powers disbanded this force in 1945. It is helpful for this study to think of the losing military forces at the time of Austria’s independence as those that did not conceptually fit into a neutral European country’s armed forces during the Cold War. Former Wehrmacht forces made up part of this group. Socialist-leaning personnel also made up part of it, just as Soviet appointed government officials made up part of the “losing” government after the Soviet Union relinquished political control of its occupation zone.<sup>32</sup>

This conceptual framework for Austria is useful because it complements a rather weak geographic division—the Soviet and Western Allied occupation zones—with a chronological division. Conceiving division in terms of time distinguishes Austria’s independent government after 1955 from two previous periods: the ten years in which the Soviets sought to make Austria a Communist country and the period between the Anschluss and 1945, when the Third Reich governed the country. By analyzing the fate of the losing military and the emergence of a new armed force in this geospatial-chronological framework, it is easier to make comparisons with analyses in the firmer geographic divisions of Germany and Vietnam that divided their dominant and minor military forces.

These adjustments aside, Austria is also a worthy case to examine because it presents new input variables for consideration that Germany and Vietnam do not. These include the management of unification primarily by external powers, the creation of NATO, and the decision by the Austrian government to accept neutrality as a condition for its independence. Chapter 5 is concerned partly with examining causality between these variables and the two outcomes of interest: the fading of ultra-right and ultra-left Austrian militant wings into history and the development of a small self-defense force that reflected the new government’s neutral policies.

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<sup>32</sup> James Jay Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War: The Struggle for Occupied Austria*, Texas A & M University Military History Series 81 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 182.



## **The Assimilation of Hong Kong into China in 1997**

The second half of Chapter 5 analyzes the impact of China's assimilation of Hong Kong on the fate of the city's garrison force and the People's Liberation Army (PLA), both within the historic city and in greater China. The date of the event and Hong Kong's location off the coast of Southeast China easily meet two of the basic requirements. Hong Kong's case does not fit the cultural-language requirement as well as the other three examples, however, because of the differences between Cantonese and Mandarin Chinese. Cantonese, the primary dialect of Hong Kong, is different enough from Mandarin that PLA leaders were able to use the distinction to promote separation between PLA members and the population of Hong Kong following unification.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, in written form Cantonese and Mandarin are fairly similar, and the provinces surrounding Hong Kong also employ the dialect. Therefore, even though much of the territory is a physical island, it is not so much a cultural one.<sup>34</sup>

Hong Kong complements the other three cases in at least two ways that are pertinent to this study. First, Hong Kong was a politically separate entity from the rest of China for 156 years—much longer than national separation in any of the other three cases. Therefore, the case affords the opportunity to compare the effects of long versus short periods of separation on the military forces of the dominant and minor sides. Second, unlike the other cases, China and Britain had decades of relatively peaceful coexistence during which to plan for Hong Kong's assimilation. Chapter 5 lays out how this planning played out from a military perspective.

As with Austria, certain distinctions in the Hong Kong case require a modification in the language used to describe it. Because of Hong Kong's size relative to China, the event in 1997 is more of an incorporation of territory than a unification. The above paragraphs have already introduced this term, but later chapters will also use others that reinforce it. These include "handover," "changeover," and "reversion" (to Chinese control).

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<sup>33</sup> Neil Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn: The Hong Kong Handover to China*, 1st English ed (London ; Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, 1998), 109.

<sup>34</sup> Jon Lam, "Cantonese vs. Mandarin Chinese," *Shanghai Expat*, April 12, 2013, <http://www.shanghaiepat.com/article/cantonese-vs-mandarin-chinese-27120.html?page=0,0>.



The Hong Kong case is also unique in that the role of Britain presents a fusion of external and domestic independent variables. Although the European nation was clearly an external power in 1842, when it acquired Hong Kong, and remained so in the view of the Chinese in 1997, its role in governing and transforming Hong Kong during the course of the city-state's colonial status merit its classification as a domestic player for the purposes of this study.

Furthermore, classifying Britain as a domestic player for Hong Kong's handover to China distinguishes it from the great powers in play at the time of the handover: the United States, Russia, and China. Chapter 5 concludes that these powers actually had little effect on the city-state's handover and its military outcome. Even absence of influence may have had an effect on China's treatment of the remaining Hong Kong garrison forces, however. It provides a valuable contrast with the other three cases, in which two or all three of the same powers (with Russia taking the place of the Soviet Union) had a more significant effect.

### **A Balanced Analysis**

The final reason for the choice of these diverse cases within the broader context of unification is their occurrence in different places of the world: two in Europe and two in Asia. Any conclusions drawn will therefore be relatively free of cultural or regional bias. Put another way, comparing cases from opposite sides of the world will make such bias more obvious just as a European going on vacation to Asia would become aware of his own biases. In terms of the unification of countries, regional or cultural bias may take the form of a greater inclination to use force rather than diplomacy to accomplish unification. Alternatively, it may emerge in differing interpretations of the civil-military relationship—whether the population is expected actively to contribute to national defense and whether the military maintains a high degree of physical separation from society. While this paper does not explore these issues as deeply as the political variables, they are worth considering in explaining the military outcomes of unified states.

### **Comparing the Four Cases**

Table 1 on the next page is a brief glance at the four cases' characteristics, many of which Chapter 6 will explore in greater depth. The table reveals the differences among the cases in the types of territories that unified; the circumstances of their separation; relative populations, territorial sizes, economies, and amount of military manpower; and the means of unification.



**Table 1: Comparison of the Four Cases**

	Germany, 1990	Vietnam, 1975	Austria, 1955	China-Hong Kong, 1997
type of territories unifying	two states: German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the East & Federal Republic of Germany in the West	two states: Republic of Vietnam (RVN) in the South & Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) in the North	four occupied zones of the country; effectively two political strongholds	modern state (People's Republic of China) and British colonial territory
circumstances of separation	Britain, France, United States, and Soviet Union occupied it after World War II; unresolved disputes with Soviet Union led to the creation of two states.	Dividing line between the two sides coincided with French colonial divisions, but superpower rivalry and US containment policy reinforced it.	Britain, France, United States and Soviet Union occupied it after World War II; the first three powers disputed conditions of independence with Soviet Union for a decade	Britain acquired Hong Kong as a concession of the Opium Wars (1841-2)
relative population	<u>FRG (West):</u> 60,110,000 (1988) <u>GDR (East):</u> 16,736,000 (1988)	<u>DRV (North):</u> 21,600,000 (1971) <u>RVN (South):</u> 19,299,000 (1971)	<u>Soviet zone:</u> 3,600,000 (est. 1955) <u>US/UK/French zones:</u> 3,350,000 (est. 1955)	<u>China:</u> 1,210,004,956 (1996) <u>Hong Kong:</u> 6,300,000 (1996)
relative area	<u>FRG (West):</u> 95,975 sq mi <u>GDR (East):</u> 41,768 sq mi	<u>DRV (North):</u> 61,290 sq mi <u>RVN (South):</u> 64,948 sq mi	<u>Soviet zone:</u> 9200 sq mi <u>US/UK/French zones:</u> 23,100 sq mi	<u>China:</u> 3,696,000 sq mi <u>Hong Kong:</u> 415 sq mi
relative GDP/GNP	<u>FRG (West):</u> GNP: \$898 billion (1986) <u>GDR (East):</u> GNP: \$93 billion (1984)	<u>DRV (North):</u> GNP: \$1.8 billion (1974) <u>RVN (South):</u> GNP: \$2.7 billion (1974)	unknown for each zone; total GNP for 1955 was approx. \$4.2 billion	<u>China:</u> GDP: \$616 billion (1996) <u>Hong Kong:</u> \$177.4 billion (1997)
relative military manpower (active duty)	<u>West Germany:</u> 494,300 <u>East Germany:</u> 173,100	<u>North Vietnam:</u> 583,000 <u>South Vietnam:</u> 565,000	unknown within each occupation zone; total active duty force at unification numbered 53,000	<u>China:</u> 3 million (1997) <u>Hong Kong:</u> 10,000 (1994); reduced to 1400 by 1997
means/occasion of unification	post-Cold War: political agreement and peaceful West German takeover of East Germany	immediate post-conflict: North Vietnamese military victory over South Vietnam	delayed post-conflict: Soviet Union decoupled Austria from issue of Germany's unification; Austria agreed to be neutral post-independence	conclusion of contract: political agreement ended 99-year loan to Britain; Hong Kong became a Special Administrative Region of China

*Source:* Information in the table compiled from *The Military Balance* (1974/75, 1989/90, & 1997/98), *The World Almanac and Book of Facts* (1955, 1974, 1989, & 1997). Some data for Austria also came from Steiner, *Modern Austria*; the "Austrian Forum" website; and Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*. Data for Hong Kong came partly from the World Bank's website and Dutton, "Hong Kong – The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint."

## A Few Notes

This study uses a few terms in ways that require explanation. First, although the world “military” refers to all the service branches of a country, each case study centers mostly on armies. The reason is that in each case, the armies are by far the largest of the service branches involved in unification on either side. Therefore, using the acronym for a country’s army interchangeably with its military is justified. The Bundeswehr substitutes in this study for the West Germany military, the NVA for the East German military, the PAVN for the North Vietnamese military, the ARVN for the South Vietnamese military, and the PLA for the Chinese military.

Nevertheless, there are instances of other military services playing a role in unification. In his report to *Military Review*, Joseph Gordon mentions that West Germany integrated a few GDR Air Force assets—though not naval assets—into the post-unification German Air Force. Chapter 6 discusses this decision. Second, as Chapter 5 discusses, the PLA units that oversaw security in Hong Kong after its incorporation into China included a helicopter group and a patrol boat fleet. According to the Chinese military structure, however, such units still fall under the PLA—there is no independent Chinese Air Force or Navy.<sup>35</sup>

Another decision needing clarification in this study is the use of the terms “dominant” and “minor” to describe the states and their forces during unification. These terms were chosen over “superior” and “inferior” or “winning” and “losing” because they better cover the variety of circumstances under which unification takes place. The terms acknowledge that one side plays a greater role than the other in the process while considering that the means of unification vary from a military conquest to a diplomatic agreement.

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<sup>35</sup> Dutton, “Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint,” 21.

## Chapter 3

### The Unification of Germany in 1990

The unification of Germany officially took place on October 3, 1990, following the collapse of East Germany, also known as the German Democratic Republic (GDR). For over 40 years, the GDR had existed as a separate country from West Germany, also known as the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG).<sup>1</sup> The two countries originated with the failure of the Soviet Union and the three Western World War Two allies—the United States, Britain, and France—to agree on a peace treaty for the country. In 1949, the combined British, French, and American postwar occupation zones became the FRG, and the Soviet zone became the GDR. During the division, the FRG set up its government in Bonn, located in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, and the GDR retained the traditional German capital of Berlin, located well within the Soviet zone. The war victors had divided Berlin into four occupation zones as well, but in sync with the larger country the Western half became democratic and the Eastern half became communist. Unable to prevent East Germans from escaping into West Berlin despite the posting of armed guards with orders to shoot refugees, in 1961 the GRD government constructed a 26-mile long wall crowned with barbed wire along the border between the two halves.<sup>2</sup> The breaking of this wall in 1989 became the symbol of German unification, after which West Germany absorbed the GDR into its democratic capitalist system.

Three notable characteristics marked the unification process. The first was that unification took place in the absence of extensive prior planning by either side, the fall of the Berlin Wall being the prime example. East German citizens' assault on the 28-year-old edifice dividing the two halves of the city on November 9, 1989, was an unexpected reaction to a public announcement by Socialist Unity Party (SED) official Günter Schabowski. His proclamation that "exit visas from the [GDR] would be made accessible to all who wanted them," and that "permanent emigration can occur at any border crossing between the GDR and the FRG or West Berlin" was meant to stabilize

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<sup>1</sup> A. James McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 4, 164, 211.

<sup>2</sup> David C. Whitney, *Two Dynamic Decades: A Pictorial History of the Space Age Generation*, ed. Thomas C. Jones (Chicago: J. C. Ferguson Publishing Company, 1967), 90, 102-3.

the country. Instead, the announcement weakened the government's control of the population, which took Schabowski's words as assurance that they could enter West Germany freely and without retribution.<sup>3</sup> West Germany was not prepared for this outcome, Bonn having not "provided for the possibility that the East German people might act on their own behalf."<sup>4</sup>

The second characteristic was that the FRG absorbed the GDR quickly: less than a year lapsed between the fall of the Berlin Wall and the formal unification of the country.<sup>5</sup> This outcome belied the expectations of pro-democracy civic groups, German social groups on both sides of the border, and the US media for a more gradual transition.<sup>6</sup>

Third, the process took place without a display of violence. Unification began with domestic collapse in the GDR and a flow of refugees into West Berlin.<sup>7</sup> The political pillars for unification came with FRG Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Ten-Point Plan for German unity a few weeks after the opening of the Berlin Wall. Kohl advocated providing aid to East German refugees and promoting "peaceful development in freedom" between the two states. Although the *Bundeswehr* would shortly play a leading role in unification, Kohl made no mention of it in the plan.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, those who served in the *National Volksarmee* (NVA), the East German army, did nothing to stop the FRG's progress in taking over the GDR. NVA leadership directed border guards not to use violence against citizens fleeing over the wall, and many guards actually worked with West German police to restore order at the symbolic juncture. Many other NVA in East Germany would also "work actively to ensure that the transition to democracy was peaceful."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> "Temporary Regulation Pending Passage of a Corresponding Ordinance," *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 10 November, 1989 in Konrad H. Jarausch and Volker Gransow, eds., *Uniting Germany: Documents and Debates, 1944-1993*, trans. Allison Brown and Belinda Cooper (Providene, RI: Berghahn Books, 1994), 77; McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification*, 3.

<sup>4</sup> McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification*, 200.

<sup>5</sup> Frederick Zilian Jr., *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1999), 50.

<sup>6</sup> Jarausch and Gransow, *Uniting Germany: Documents and Debates, 1944-1993*, 83-5, 94-5.

<sup>7</sup> McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification*, 205-6.

<sup>8</sup> Jarausch and Gransow, eds., *Uniting Germany: Documents and Debates*, 86, 89.

<sup>9</sup> Dale R. Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military* (New York: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, 1998), 29, 68-9.

## The Fate of the NVA

In spite of the NVA's cooperative efforts, the FRG had no intention of preserving it as an independent entity. Although there was some discussion toward creating two separate armies following unification, the FRG Defense Minister saw "no reason to treat [the NVA] as if it were a real army," and he stood fast against the idea.<sup>10</sup> In fact, the FRG ultimately used East German criminal law to convict and sentence two senior GDR officials for their roles in the fatal shooting of 68 East Germans trying to escape to West Germany over the Berlin Wall between 1961 and 1989.<sup>11</sup>

The decision to disband the NVA had both personal and practical consequences for the service and its members after unification. Instead of recognizing NVA officers that had to resign as members of a national German army, the Ministry of Defense acknowledged them as veterans of foreign armed forces. This alternate status deprived them of privileges ranging from the use of rank in retirement to receiving state military burials.<sup>12</sup>

More practically, the FRG's decision to disband the NVA meant that it had to give up not only its personnel, but also its weapons, equipment, and facilities to the *Bundeswehr*. In the period leading up to unification, elements of the *Bundeswehr* moved into the GDR to confiscate weapons, properly dispose of munitions, and determine what to keep or upgrade and what to demolish.<sup>13</sup>

Although "the *Bundeswehr* had not addressed the issue of what to do with NVA officers if unification were to come about—primarily because few of them seriously expected it to occur"—it promoted a peaceful transition in line with the cooperative spirit of Kohl's Ten Point Plan.<sup>14</sup> The *Bundeswehr* set up a unit, *Kommando-Ost*, under which its officers paired up with NVA personnel at their units in the GDR.<sup>15</sup> *Kommando-Ost's* commander, Lieutenant General Jorg Schönbohm, appointed *Bundeswehr* officers over these units, but he claimed to seek reconciliation with the NVA as a first priority.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites*, 106; Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, 130-1.

<sup>11</sup> John Laughland, *A History of Political Trials from Charles I to Saddam Hussein* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2008), 196, 205.

<sup>12</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites*, 119-20, 125-7.

<sup>13</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 149.

<sup>14</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, 146.

<sup>15</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, 9.

<sup>16</sup> Joseph S. Gordon, "German Unification and the Bundeswehr," *Military Review* (November 1991), 28.



Schönbohm toured East Germany, publicized the *Bundeswehr*, improved NVA facilities, and “worked especially closely with the employment offices and regional industries in an effort to find jobs for the many soldiers who were leaving the armed forces.”<sup>17</sup> Many members of the NVA stayed on active duty long enough to assist *Kommando-Ost* with its duties, and they provided needed expertise with weapons and equipment.<sup>18</sup>

### **The Character of a Unified German Military**

Although the NVA was disbanded, West Germany decided to integrate a limited number of NVA personnel into its ranks. In the interest of exerting sovereignty in a way that was acceptable to East Germans and avoiding the creation of a security vacuum, Bonn chose to assimilate select NVA personnel to serve in the *Bundeswehr* even as it released others.<sup>19</sup> The *Bundeswehr* released all NVA flag officers, SED political officers, and military members over 55 years of age, but it kept any other personnel who desired to continue serving past Unification Day—at least temporarily.<sup>20</sup>

Over the course of the following year, several criteria determined who would stay and who would go. Those with enough time in service received retirements according to NVA regulations, while those who either obtained civilian jobs or whose ideology proved “incompatible with *Bundeswehr* principles” were simply released.<sup>21</sup> The remaining personnel stayed on for one of two reasons. The *Bundeswehr* needed some for tasks such as “the removal of unneeded NVA equipment and ammunition, the deactivation of units and facilities, and the guarding of large weapons and ammunition storage sites.”<sup>22</sup> Other personnel could stay on for a two-year trial period during which they decided whether to continue a military career in united Germany, and the *Bundeswehr* also determined their suitability for doing so.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 155, 185.

<sup>18</sup> Gordon, “German Unification and the Bundeswehr,” 21.

<sup>19</sup> Gordon, “German Unification and the Bundeswehr,” 21.

<sup>20</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 8; Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 127, 146.

<sup>21</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People’s (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 104.

<sup>22</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People’s (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 105.

<sup>23</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People’s (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 105.



The composition of the *Bundeswehr* by the spring of 1992 reveals that a sizable number of NVA personnel were serving a united Germany, but they were a small percentage of the whole. Schönbohm's replacement, Lieutenant General Werner von Scheven, announced then that although 90,000 NVA officers and enlisted members had "joined the *Bundeswehr* on the basis of special preliminary terms of service," only 4000 former NVA active duty officers remained for the duration of the two-year trial period.<sup>24</sup> Von Scheven did not mention the number of enlisted members who remained during the period, but author Andrew Bickford estimated the number at 20,000.<sup>25</sup>

The *Bundeswehr* established a system of evaluation, reeducation, and socialization for assimilating former NVA members.<sup>26</sup> Beginning during the trial period, *Bundeswehr* supervisors evaluated former NVA personnel semiannually based on character, potential, and performance, in that order of priority.<sup>27</sup> In addition, the *Bundeswehr* transferred 850 of its own NCOs to East Germany to help build a professional corps that would consist largely of former East Germans recruited since unification.<sup>28</sup>

The emphasis the *Bundeswehr* placed on its principles at the expense of the NVA's history reflected the break with the past that it sought to make. This break is understandable in light of the general perception in West Germany and elsewhere that "the East Germans and their political system had lost."<sup>29</sup> How geopolitical and inter-German political factors determined the nature of this loss and affected the makeup of the *Bundeswehr* in united Germany are the subjects of this chapter.

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<sup>24</sup> "Werner von Scheven on the Merger of the Two Armies, Spring 1992," Jarausch and Gransow, eds., *Uniting Germany: Documents and Debates, 1944-1993*, 248.

<sup>25</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 8.

<sup>26</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 152.

<sup>27</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 113.

<sup>28</sup> Jarausch and Gransow, eds., *Uniting Germany: Documents and Debates, 1944-1993*, 248.

<sup>29</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 153.

### **External Influence on the Fate of the NVA and the Character of a Unified *Bundeswehr***

The same geopolitical conditions that contributed to a quick, nonviolent German unification also led to the rapid, nonviolent dismantling of the NVA. The political and economic reforms of the Soviet Union constituted the first condition. These reforms deprived the GDR of valuable support and led to trust-building diplomatic discussions between the West and Moscow. The second condition was the acceptance of other countries in NATO and the budding European Union for the unification of Germany under West German control. As a result of these two conditions, the *Bundeswehr* had relatively free reign to enter East Germany and dismantle the NVA. These conditions also gave unified Germany the freedom to assimilate portions of the NVA into the *Bundeswehr*, although the emerging structures of NATO and the European Union dictated profound changes in the *Bundeswehr*'s mission. It transformed from a primarily European defense-minded force to a smaller expeditionary one that could deploy for contingencies outside the continent. Together, these decisions constrained the number of former NVA members who could serve in the *Bundeswehr* and further required them to make a clean break with their past.

### **Pre-Reform Soviet Relations with the GDR and the NVA**

The East German government had depended largely on the Soviet Union for legitimacy during its existence. Apart from having overseen the establishment of a Communist government there after World War II, Moscow bolstered the power of the GDR's political leaders in the face of domestic unrest during its early years. Following a rash of protests and strikes against East German SED Secretary Walter Ulbricht in 1953 over the party's industrial production quotas, for example, the state's Soviet patron increased its support for his leadership. This support gave him the confidence to see "to the removal of his most prominent critics" and assert "his government's grip over East German society."<sup>30</sup>

Moscow also provided leverage to the GDR's political claims vis-a-vis West Germany. In 1958, "Soviet authorities consciously linked widespread hopes for the

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<sup>30</sup> McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification*, 40-41.

convening of a summit conference on disarmament with renewed pressure on the West to acknowledge East German interests in Berlin, including, most importantly, the GDR's claims to control the transit routes that passed over its territory between West Berlin and the FRG.<sup>31</sup>

Because the GDR depended on the Soviet Union, it also sought to prove the value of its military to its patron. "For East German politicians, the militarization of the GDR and the founding of the NVA were to show the Soviets that the GDR was a staunch and reliable ally—a move designed to prevent the USSR from backing away from the GDR and allowing it to dissolve."<sup>32</sup> According to another source, "East Berlin went farther than its communist neighbors to convince Moscow that the GDR, including the NVA, was the most reliable of its European allies" because it was afraid the Soviet Union might overlook it in favor of an agreement with West Germany.<sup>33</sup>

Like the East German government, the NVA depended on the Soviet Union for its legitimacy. West Germany's characterization of the NVA as an instrument of the SED—itsself an outgrowth of Soviet socialist policy--was largely correct in that political officers exerted considerable control inside the NVA.<sup>34</sup> The NVA did not view these officers' presence as an intrusion. Rather, "The SED's leadership role was seen as necessary and understood."<sup>35</sup> The SED presence motivated NVA commanders to ensure their units adhered to Soviet doctrine and were behaving loyally towards the Warsaw Pact.<sup>36</sup>

Although the NVA sought to preserve Prussian heritage in its military culture, it also depended on the Soviet Union professionally. The Soviets had shaped the development of the NVA's personnel for decades, bringing its officers to Soviet schools to study and many of its members to train.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification*, 22.

<sup>32</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 44.

<sup>33</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 6.

<sup>34</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 147.

<sup>35</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's Army by the Bundeswehr*, 37-8.

<sup>36</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's Army by the Bundeswehr*, 33.

<sup>37</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 18-9;

## East German-Soviet Splintering and Growing Soviet Accord with the West

Long before Gorbachev, there were signs of splintering between the Soviet Union and its East German satellite, with implications for the power of the NVA. In the late 1960s, Secretary Ulbricht's efforts to compete with West Germany's living standards through independent economic initiatives rather than the traditional Soviet-style Five-Year Plans began to alienate him from Moscow. The Soviet Union returned the favor in 1971 when it marginalized Ulbricht during its negotiations with Britain, France, and the United States on the future of Germany and the status of Berlin. Angry at being left out of the negotiations, Secretary Ulbricht "returned to the favored tactic...of disrupting the Autobahn traffic to and from Berlin."<sup>38</sup> Such actions make it appear that while Moscow was seeking to accommodate the West in its efforts to normalize relations with East Germany, GRD leadership was resisting.

In the early 1980s, relational trends between the Soviet Union and West Germany again ran counter to East Germany's preferences, but this time the relations flipped: Just as East and West German leaders started to engage in constructive diplomacy, the Soviet Union stationed SS-20 missiles in the GDR. The event revealed that while East German leadership had been pursuing contact with the FRG as an independent goal, Moscow viewed such communication as a means to strengthen its Communist presence in Eastern Europe.<sup>39</sup>

In spite of these conflicting relations, the SED still sought the Soviet Union's socialist backing for its political legitimacy. It is for this reason that Gorbachev's famous demands for *glasnost* ("openness") and *perestroika* ("restructuring") worried the government of SED General Secretary Erich Honecker by the late 1980s. The reforms came about as the East German economy had begun to suffer, and splinters had begun to develop in the SED between those like Honecker who tried to suppress the problems and those who sought active reform. When Gorbachev used the GDR's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in October 1989 to urge both the East German government and the people to press for reforms like those he had enacted in the Soviet Union, contenders in the SED took the opportunity to oust Honecker. His successors, however, were unable to address "the need

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<sup>38</sup> McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification*, 78-9, 82, 90.

<sup>39</sup> McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification*, 158-9.

for deep, structural reform within the party, the calling of truly democratic elections, and the legalization of other political parties” that would have appeased the population.

The return to a hard line socialist stance was also impossible without ideological support from the Soviet Union.<sup>40</sup> Ever since Gorbachev had “announced ‘freedom of choice’ for socialist states in his [December 1988] UN speech,” it was evident to the GDR government that it would have to ensure regime continuity on its own.<sup>41</sup> A reception that German Chancellor Helmut Kohl held in Bonn for Gorbachev in June 1989, during which Kohl and his political party pressed for “a closer relationship with the reformist governments of Hungary and Poland,” only heightened this sentiment among SED conservatives.<sup>42</sup>

The splintering of East German-Soviet relations also affected the NVA, although its allegiance to the Soviet Union had always had its limits. The NVA had “exerted its own German individuality” at times, such as the decision to march at a different tempo than the Soviets in parades.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, although public announcements of the fraternity between the two states’ forces were frequent, one former NVA brigadier general simply characterized the relationship as “diplomatic and obliging.”<sup>44</sup> A retired lieutenant colonel also remarked after being stationed in Moscow that “the continuously sworn brotherhood [between the two armed forces] proved a farce.”<sup>45</sup>

Despite these sentiments, however, the NVA needed Soviet backing to remain powerful against the West. Although the West did not target the NVA specifically, Communist socialization had taught the NVA soldier to hate it. The small book “On the Sense of Being a Soldier” issued to every NVA member, read as follows: “We hate imperialism, because it threatens the existence of humanity, of our life, and the happiness and future of our children. As soldiers we oppose this mortal enemy of

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<sup>40</sup> McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification*, 179, 197-8.

<sup>41</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People’s (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 22.

<sup>42</sup> McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification*, 192.

<sup>43</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 19;

<sup>44</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People’s Army by the Bundeswehr*, 33.

<sup>45</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People’s Army by the Bundeswehr*, 51.

humanity directly at the dividing line of the two social systems.”<sup>46</sup> To the degree that the NVA believed such statements, Gorbachev’s decision in December 1988 to withdraw 50,000 soldiers from central and eastern Europe—East Germany included—left the NVA more insecure and unsure of itself.<sup>47</sup> Both physically and psychologically, the NVA believed it had lost significant backing to repel any form of military occupation from the West.

The fall of the Berlin Wall took place in this environment of uncertainty, and Soviet forces still stationed in East Germany received no orders to interfere in the ensuing domestic collapse. This outcome is understandable in light of the increase in West German-Soviet dialogue, which is recorded in Kohl’s Ten Point Plan for Unification in November 1989. “In our joint declaration of June this year,” Kohl wrote, “...General Secretary Gorbachev and I spoke of the structural elements of a ‘common European home.’”<sup>48</sup> By outlining to the Soviet Union roles for a unified Germany that contributed to European solidarity and the “institutional logic of the post-1945 order”, Kohl allayed historically persistent Soviet fears of German nationalism.<sup>49</sup> Kohl also joined the US-drafted 2 + 4 Talks (the two Germanys plus the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, and France—the “Four Powers”), a “means of managing Soviet concerns” in which the participating powers assured Gorbachev that “the NATO framework would inhibit the renationalization of defense policies and that this would be a better alternative than the nonaligned status of the interwar period.”<sup>50</sup> Perhaps the most symbolic of Gorbachev’s responses to this framing of unification was his decision on July 16, 1990, to approve NATO membership for a united Germany.<sup>51</sup>

The Soviet Union also required Germany to make some sacrifices, however. According to the same agreement, Germany paid the Soviet Union about US \$8 billion to

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<sup>46</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's Army by the Bundeswehr*, 36.

<sup>47</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's Army by the Bundeswehr*, 22.

<sup>48</sup> Jarausch and Gransow, *Uniting Germany: Documents and Debates, 1944-1993*, 87.

<sup>49</sup> G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars*, Princeton Studies in International History and Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 5.

<sup>50</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's Army by the Bundeswehr*, 23-4.

<sup>51</sup> Chauncy Harris, “The Unification of Germany in 1990,” *Geographical Review* 81, no. 2 (April 1991), 173.



relocate the remaining Soviet troops out of East Germany. Furthermore, Germany would reduce the size of its armed forces to 370,000. This restriction resulted in the release of 120,000 members of the *Bundeswehr*, not to mention the separation of the majority of the GDR's 100,000 military members.<sup>52</sup>

Nevertheless, in view of its decreasing support for the GDR and its warming up to the West, the Soviet Union proved a powerful player among the forces that hastened the GDR's decline and eventually allowed the *Bundeswehr* to take over the NVA. There are two ways to look at the relationship among these processes, and they are not mutually exclusive. Gorbachev's reforms left the stagnant GDR government weak in the face of popular forces and subsequent pressures from West Germany that challenged its existence. Additionally, East Germany's weakness and detachment created openings for West Germany. One historian has remarked that "when relations between powers...deteriorate, the position of third powers necessarily improves, and in each case those shifting power relations have important effects on policy."<sup>53</sup> Although relations between East and West Germany had been steadily improving in the 1980s, the growing polarization between the SED and the East German population regarding Soviet reforms by the latter part of the decade prompted German Chancellor Helmut Kohl to bypass the GDR and appeal to Gorbachev's reforms directly. However one views the connection of Soviet reform and dialogue with West Germany to the weakening of the GDR, the result was to increase the political maneuvering room of the *Bundeswehr* as it crossed the border.

### **Pan-European Acceptance for Unification under West German Control, and its Effect on the Fate of the NVA and the New *Bundeswehr***

Besides the trust of the Soviet Union, the confidence of West Germany's neighbors in its plan for unification helped ease the entry of the *Bundeswehr* into East Germany and gave it latitude in taking over and assimilating portions of the NVA. German leadership's reassurance of these processes within the emerging structure of the European Union and NATO was crucial for securing this confidence. In turn, the

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<sup>52</sup> Chauncy Harris, "The Unification of Germany in 1990," *Geographical Review* 81, no. 2 (April 1991), 173.

<sup>53</sup> Marc Trachtenberg, *The Craft of International History a Guide to Method* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 35.



coincident changes in these institutions as the Cold War ended increased the *Bundeswehr*'s responsibilities and transformed it into a more flexible, expeditionary force.

Considering Germany's past, gaining the approval of other European states for its unification was not easy. "The events surrounding and following unification gave rise to deep suspicion amongst Germany's neighbor countries, notably France and Great Britain, which viewed the emergence of a giant at their door-steps with a population of more than 80 million and a powerful economy with great concern...British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher feared that Germany would become 'the Japan of Europe, but worse than Japan'. The lust for power would give the German 'juggernaut' in peace 'what Hitler couldn't get in war'."<sup>54</sup> Meanwhile, the French feared that an unrestrained Germany would return to the swing politics of Bismarck in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>55</sup>

Chancellor Kohl took formal initiative from the beginning of the unification process to alleviate such concerns. In his Ten Points following the fall of the Berlin Wall, he expressed that "the development of intra-German relations remains embedded in the pan-European process...The future architecture of Germany must fit into the future architecture of Europe as a whole."<sup>56</sup>

In accordance with this vision, Kohl shortly submitted to governing Germany's increased territory within a more integrated Europe. He accepted a proposal by France in early 1990 to limit Germany through "an ever deeper web of institutional checks and balances" and increase cooperation between the two states.<sup>57</sup> The German government also amended its constitution to include "commitments to development of the European Union and 'the realization of a united Europe'."<sup>58</sup> Such pledges of faith earned Germany freedom from control by outside powers, as witnessed in the *Treaty on the Concluding Settlement with Regard to Germany*. With the Four Powers' signing of this treaty on September 13, 1990, they relinquished the privileges and duties they had held in Berlin

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<sup>54</sup> Franz-Josef Meiers, "A Change of Course? Germany Foreign and Security Policy After Unification" in Winand Gellner and John D. Robertson, eds., *The Berlin Republic: German Unification and a Decade of Changes* (London ; Portland, Or: F. Cass, 2003), 197-8.

<sup>55</sup> Meiers, "A Change of Course?", 198.

<sup>56</sup> Jarausch and Gransow, *Uniting Germany: Documents and Debates, 1944-1993*, 87.

<sup>57</sup> Gellner and Robertson, *The Berlin Republic*, 198.

<sup>58</sup> Gellner and Robertson, *The Berlin Republic*, 198.

and Germany since the end of World War II.<sup>59</sup> Only four days later, the *Bundeswehr* arrived in the GDR for the task of dismantling the NVA.<sup>60</sup>

That the *Bundeswehr* was able to dissolve many of the NVA units prior to formal unification indicates it was relatively free from political influence, either from Bonn or from external powers. In fact, the German government emphasized the tempo of the process more than how to conduct it. Although the government's primary reason for this directive was to save money, its guidance accelerated attainment of a single German army. This achievement that would have been less acceptable to Germany's neighbors without Kohl's willingness to unify the country within the European framework.<sup>61</sup>

In addition, "the tremendous changes taking place in the Germanys from the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 to Unification in October 1990 were rivaled by the changes in the European security system, all of which combined with the Unification and takeover of the NVA to present to the *Bundeswehr* a dramatically new basis for planning."<sup>62</sup> One of these bases came out of the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty of November 19, 1990, which put numerical limits on weapon systems and equipment the *Bundeswehr* could have. These limits did not account for any addition of systems and equipment from the NVA. Although the *Bundeswehr* personnel limitations that came out of Kohl's negotiations with Gorbachev earlier in the year restricted the assimilation of the NVA into a unified military, the CFE treaty indirectly did so as well.<sup>63</sup>

The other basis for planning came out of the London Declaration of July 6, 1990, which dictated changes in NATO largely to convince the Soviet Union that the organization was "evolving into a non-threatening military alliance."<sup>64</sup> The effect on the *Bundeswehr* as a NATO contributing force was to orient it away from former rival militaries of the Warsaw Pact toward more generalized European security threats. Although the *Bundeswehr* kept its traditional missions of both "national and NATO

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<sup>59</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 134.

<sup>60</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 148.

<sup>61</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 74-5.

<sup>62</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 177.

<sup>63</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 160, 177.

<sup>64</sup> Gellner and Robertson, eds., *The Berlin Republic*, 206.

defense,” the broader definition of security that emerged within the post-Cold War European framework required it to plan for missions outside NATO’s historic boundaries.<sup>65</sup>

This planning required a more expeditionary mindset that discouraged some efforts to integrate NVA members into the *Bundeswehr*. First, there was the practical challenge of simultaneously dismantling the NVA, integrating some of its members, and making the *Bundeswehr* into a smaller, more expeditionary force. The assimilation of only 4000 former NVA officers into the *Bundeswehr* resulted partly from NATO requirements for the *Bundeswehr* to reduce its personnel to numbers below what it possessed prior to unification.<sup>66</sup>

From the standpoint of NATO and the new *Bundeswehr*, the other obstacle to assimilating NVA members was psychological: former NVA members had not conceived of military relations within the Warsaw Pact as partnerships with other states’ armed forces to the degree *Bundeswehr* members did within NATO. Therefore, some *Bundeswehr* leaders held reservations concerning NVA members’ loyalty to potential expeditionary NATO peacekeeping missions. Although some NVA members responded during unification that such military missions were “part of their profession,” the response of many former NVA officers to the 1999 NATO campaign in Kosovo suggests otherwise.<sup>67</sup> 3,000 of them withdrew their membership in the German Army Veterans’ Association because they viewed the campaign as “an attack on an ‘innocent’ country,” particularly one inside the border of a former East German ally.<sup>68</sup> In their view, the NVA was the more peaceful military because it would not have conducted such an attack.<sup>69</sup>

Their view says much about the difference in mentality between the *Bundeswehr* and the NVA generally, but it also reveals the difference between post-Cold War NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Peace enforcement had not been a mission of the latter except in the context of support for Communist governments. Therefore, the structuring of the

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<sup>65</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People’s (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 177.

<sup>66</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People’s (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 185.

<sup>67</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People’s (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 175, 180.

<sup>68</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 181-2.

<sup>69</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 181-2.

*Bundeswehr* under NATO in the 1990s did not fit into the NVA's construct of a valid military mission.<sup>70</sup> The following section discusses the roots of this perception by the NVA.

### **The Influence of Inter-German Factors on the Fate of the NVA and the Character of a Unified *Bundeswehr***

While it is impossible to fully decouple geopolitical and inter-German influences on the fate of the NVA and the character of the *Bundeswehr* in a united Germany, political factors in the relationship between the two Germanys helped contribute to a rapid, nonviolent takeover of the NVA and the emergence of a *Bundeswehr* that included former NVA members but eliminated NVA influence. Even though war did not break out between East and West Germany, the diametrically opposed ideologies of the two German governments made most West Germans averse to assimilating the NVA during unification.<sup>71</sup> Although leadership in West Germany and the *Bundeswehr* during unification acted to curb the “us-versus-them” mentality that had developed over 40 years of confrontation, Bonn pressed forward with one of the most thorough post-Cold War political criminal trials in Europe.<sup>72</sup> These trials indicted several officials with responsibilities over the NVA for crimes against humanity.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, West Germany's decision to eliminate the remaining vestiges of the GDR establishment after its collapse carried over to the NVA ranks: Those most steeped in GDR politics did not receive the option of joining the *Bundeswehr*.<sup>74</sup>

Nevertheless, a gradual improvement in political relations between the two Germanys beginning in the 1970s contributed to more flexibility in the *Bundeswehr*'s handling of the NVA during unification than it otherwise might have had. The improvement contributed to a partial integration of values that some analysts claim eased

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<sup>70</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 182-3.

<sup>71</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 130.

<sup>72</sup> A. James McAdams, *Judging the Past in Unified Germany* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 1.

<sup>73</sup> Laughland, *A History of Political Trials from Charles I to Saddam Hussein*, 196-8.

<sup>74</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 8; Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 127, 146.

GDR officials' acceptance of the *Bundeswehr* takeover and made assimilation of some NVA personnel more tolerable for the FRG.<sup>75</sup>

This section first examines the influence of German political factors on the fate of the NVA and its assimilation into the *Bundeswehr* through two lenses: inter-German political relations and the impact of the political system of each state on the structure and character of the *Bundeswehr* and NVA, respectively. According to the former analysis, the record establishes a spiral of perception and misperception in early relations between the two states, setting the foundation for persistent antagonism between the *Bundeswehr* and the NVA. Even as value integration began between the East German populace and the West in the 1970s, the NVA remained relatively isolated from it. As the East German government and economy deteriorated in the 1980s, however, the NVA's dependence on the Communist party became its downfall, contributing to its quick dismantling by the *Bundeswehr* during unification. The conflicting *Bundeswehr* perspective toward the NVA during that period reflects that of the West German government: Persistent negative perceptions of the NVA together with views to its members' crimes against humanity discouraged large-scale assimilation of former NVA members into *Bundeswehr* ranks.

How the East and West German political systems shaped the structure, character, and relationship to society of their respective militaries is also crucial to this section's analysis. Although it is impossible to decouple this factor from the political relationship of the two Germanys, the two militaries assumed qualities based largely on the influence of the political systems over them, making them incompatible with each other during unification. On one hand, the *Bundeswehr* emphasized its members' rights of citizenship under a liberal democracy, the moral responsibilities of both commanders and subordinates, and freedom of action and initiative at lower levels in accomplishing missions.<sup>76</sup> On the other hand, the NVA required unwavering loyalty to a political party, following military orders without question, and a focus on technical specialty over

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<sup>75</sup> Kang Suk Rhee, "Korea's Unification: The Applicability of the German Experience," *Asian Survey* 33, no. 4 (April 1993): 365-6.

<sup>76</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 42.

leadership in the NCO corps.<sup>77</sup> The qualities of the *Bundeswehr* eased the takeover of the NVA during unification, but the stark differences between the two militaries discouraged large scale assimilation of the NVA into *Bundeswehr* ranks.

The claims of the section rest upon the belief that military members are the signs and symbols of the political entity they defend.<sup>78</sup> This assertion has two notable consequences. First, as politics between states become more adversarial, their respective militaries assume increasingly hostile views toward each other in spite of cultural affinity. Second, political structure and ideology heavily influence military structure and ideology. Although it is impossible to separate completely the effects of the inter-German relationship from the influence of external actors, it provides useful lessons for anticipating future unification scenarios.

### **Division and Dispute: The Foundations of Perception and Misperception between the *Bundeswehr* and the NVA**

The division of occupied Germany following World War II and the emergence of Berlin as a symbolic juncture of the Cold War left East and West Germany's leaders to consolidate control within their respective states. The desire of West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer to seek unification of Germany from a position of strength set the stage for a hostile political relationship with GDR President Walter Ulbricht, who was struggling to maintain legitimacy amid economic difficulties. By 1955, Ulbricht took a hardline position against West Germany, declaring the GDR to be "the only 'legitimate German state'".<sup>79</sup>

Since the *Bundeswehr* and the NVA both came into existence in the mid-1950s, they were born into this antagonistic environment. West Germany viewed the *Bundeswehr* as "a means of consolidating the new West German state, placating the political desires and goals of West German politicians, appeasing the large number of former Wehrmacht soldiers and officers in West Germany who were increasingly political and vocal, and helping counter fears of a Soviet expansion into Western

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<sup>77</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 164-5; Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 116.

<sup>78</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 30.

<sup>79</sup> McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification*, 21, 40-1.



Europe.”<sup>80</sup> Meanwhile, the NVA became an agent by which East Germany sought to shatter the “all-German mold” that had existed before the two states’ division.<sup>81</sup>

One apparent similarity between the two military forces early on was that both sought a psychological break from Germany’s Nazi past. In the adversarial political environment, however, most in the *Bundeswehr* developed the belief that NVA officers were “simply carryovers of the Wehrmacht and SS.”<sup>82</sup> This characterization may have stemmed partly from the NVA’s decision in its early days to wear a uniform that appeared similar to the former Wehrmacht’s uniform. Ironically, only 5% of the NVA had served in the Wehrmacht—a result of a law prohibiting former Wehrmacht officers from participating in East German politics.<sup>83</sup> On the other hand, the early *Bundeswehr* relied heavily on former Wehrmacht officers.<sup>84</sup> Partly for this reason, the NVA saw West Germany as a “continuation of Nazi and fascist traditions.”<sup>85</sup>

Naturally, this perception led to the accusation by the NVA and the SED that West Germany was a militarized state that was forcing the GDR to defend itself. The construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961 and the military draft that the GDR instituted a month later, however, made the GDR appear to be more militarized.<sup>86</sup> The spiral of perception and misperception that author Robert Jervis used to describe international politics thus seemed to fit the two Germanys in the context of the Cold War.<sup>87</sup>

Even when inter-German relations improved under conditions of détente between the United States and the Soviet Union, different perceptions colored the meaning of the Basis for Relations Treaty signed by the two Germanys’ leaders in 1972. West German Chancellor Willy Brandt retained a similar narrative to that of Adenauer, repeatedly mentioning in speeches to his domestic audience after the treaty that the question of

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<sup>80</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 43.

<sup>81</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People’s (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 122-3, 192; Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 25.

<sup>82</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 33.

<sup>83</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 44.

<sup>84</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 18.

<sup>85</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 47.

<sup>86</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 46-7.

<sup>87</sup> Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976), 68.



unification was still valid. On the other hand, Erich Honecker proclaimed that the treaty emphasized the independent and sovereign nature of the two states.<sup>88</sup>

In spite of Honecker's narrative and his confidence in the socialist model, the improvement of inter-German relations from the 1970s forward set in motion a gradual integration of values between the populations of East and West. "Value integration between the East and West German people had been allowed by interpersonal contacts, flow of information, eased travel, solution of humanitarian issues, and cooperation in matters of mutual interest. There is little doubt that the [1972 Treaty] was the basis for these opportunities."<sup>89</sup>

For most of the NVA's existence, the GDR insulated it from society, postponing the effects of value integration on its ranks. Physical isolation from East German civilians and the prohibition in the NVA against Western media broadened the social distance between the military and the population. "So estranged from the people it was sworn to defend, the NVA was characterized by some as a 'state within a state'."<sup>90</sup> This separate quality would have varied effects on the *Bundeswehr* takeover in 1990. While it allowed West Germany to deal with the NVA without repercussions from the East German population, an active public relations campaign was required to demonstrate to the population that the *Bundeswehr* was more open and connected to society than the NVA had been.<sup>91</sup>

The government also restricted NVA contact with the *Bundeswehr*. SED General Secretary Honecker feared *perestroika* in the 1980s because he thought "increased contacts with the *Bundeswehr* would lead NVA officers to question many of the policies followed by the East German regime."<sup>92</sup> Understandably, the SED required that the NVA maintain a high state of war preparedness partly to deprive its officers of the opportunity to consider political issues.<sup>93</sup> Furthermore, the "one-sided nature of the

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<sup>88</sup> McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification*, 100.

<sup>89</sup> Kang, "Korea's Unification: The Applicability of the German Experience," 366.

<sup>90</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 39; Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 159.

<sup>91</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 155; Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 32.

<sup>92</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 57.

<sup>93</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 160.

information” NVA officers received from the SED “convinced them of “the aggressive intentions of the capitalistic West...The former NVA—except for perhaps intelligence officers in key places—were greatly astonished therefore to discover in 1990 that they had been fed lies”<sup>94</sup>

Despite the retirement of the more ideologically-bent NVA officers by the 1980s, the weakening of the NVA as unification approached therefore came not so much from a desire to become like the West as it did among the population, but rather the deterioration of the East German economy and the government on which the NVA had depended.<sup>95</sup> The decline of the economy in the face of East German knowledge about the West had a marked effect on political stability. Since the NVA was so closely tied to the SED, that stability was important for its cohesion. It was important for the East German military to see political officials as “competent and capable—something that increasingly was not the case.”<sup>96</sup> As the SED ceased providing control and guidance to the NVA, its military discipline suffered. Once the Berlin Wall fell, many NVA members began asking what they were defending and for what reason. Although NVA leadership was pursuing reforms to accompany those in the government as it attempted to stabilize the country, the lack of party direction made the attempt near impossible.<sup>97</sup> This condition of the NVA made it easier for West Germany to dismantle it shortly afterwards.

The unity within and general independence of the *Bundeswehr* from the West German government at the time of unification—a stark contrast to the disintegration and dependency of the NVA—simplified the takeover even more. Although there was some tension in the *Bundeswehr* regarding whether or not to assimilate NVA members into its ranks, it carried out the order of the government to dissolve NVA units “as quickly as possible” without hesitation.<sup>98</sup> The *Bundeswehr* demonstrated an ability to “‘attack’ problems,” and “to focus resources on solving whatever difficulties” it faced.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 141.

<sup>95</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 23-4.

<sup>96</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 57.

<sup>97</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 76-9.

<sup>98</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 74.

<sup>99</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 188.

This characterization hints at the qualities of the *Bundeswehr* that generally distinguished it from the NVA—a result of the two Germanys’ different political systems on which the next section focuses. For the purposes of understanding the effect of inter-German political relations on the fate of the NVA, however, it reveals that the West German government’s political narrative underwent a change after August 1989. Until that time, Chancellor Kohl had supported Willy Brandt’s *Ostpolitik* stance of reassuring the GDR of the West’s “good intentions,” encouraging legal emigration from the GDR, and accepting East German refugees only when necessary.<sup>100</sup> Reacting to the mounting GDR refugee crisis and policy changes in other Eastern bloc countries, however, Kohl began to shift in favor of greater assistance to refugees.<sup>101</sup> He then turned a blind eye to the inert SED government and went to “the sources of positive innovation in the socialist world,” namely the Soviet Union, Poland, and Hungary. As it became evident that unification was forthcoming, he assured East and West alike of his peaceful intentions and sought to maintain order in the Eastern German lands.<sup>102</sup> Sending the *Bundeswehr* to dismantle the NVA was the military side of this objective. One West German analyst believes the *Bundeswehr* was remarkably successful at meeting it: “The *Bundeswehr* has reason to be proud of having brought unification more quickly and smoothly than any other part of German society.”<sup>103</sup>

This opinion overlooks the more arduous task the *Bundeswehr* faced of changing NVA perceptions, however. Considering the NVA’s isolation from the *Bundeswehr* up until the takeover, West German officers involved in the NVA takeover and assimilation of select members into its ranks faced the difficulty of convincing their former rivals that the *Bundeswehr* was a force for peace and stability. During the initial briefings that Lieutenant General Schönbohm gave to former NVA officers during the takeover, one colonel complained that the NVA had also “served the cause of peace and stability in Europe. Schönbohm responded by acknowledging that although he respected the positive role they had played in ensuring a peaceful transition from communism to democracy, the

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<sup>100</sup> Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed: A Study in Statecraft* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 66.

<sup>101</sup> Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed: A Study in Statecraft* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 66-7.

<sup>102</sup> McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification*, 192, 203.

<sup>103</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 188.

fact remained that the regime they had served had shown no respect for the rights of individuals. If NVA officers hoped to serve in the *Bundeswehr* in the future, ‘you must unconditionally free yourself from the past of the socialist armed forces,’” he responded.<sup>104</sup>

Schönbohm’s response to the colonel was not just rhetoric; it was the official policy of the West German Ministry of Defense. One reason for the policy was “the different traditions of the German armed forces in the east and west” as FRG Minister of Defense Gerhard Stoltenberg explained.<sup>105</sup> The next section will discuss these different traditions in more detail. Three other reasons were less presentable diplomatically, but they held sway with many in the West German population and government. The first two are the West German perception of the NVA as “an instrument of the SED,” and its members as the “perpetrators and ‘losers’ of the Cold War,” respectively.<sup>106</sup> The third reason is the connection of the NVA with crimes against humanity near the Berlin Wall during the division of the two Germanys.

Giving the NVA some degree of recognition would have been hard to justify, as legal proceedings were unfolding against former political leaders who had responsibility for actions the NVA had taken since the GDR’s founding. “Since the Berlin Wall had been put up in 1961, at least 200 people had been shot dead trying to escape to the West”; West Germany had connected both the former GDR defense minister and the head of its army to 68 of those deaths.<sup>107</sup> There were also NVA members perceived to be guilty based simply on their connections. “The German Unification Treaty of August 31, 1990, provided for the dismissal of any officials or administrators who had collaborated with the Stasi or could be linked to human rights violations in the GDR if their actions were sufficiently serious to make them ‘appear unsuitable,’ ...for continued public service.”<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 180.

<sup>105</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People’s (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 122.

<sup>106</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 147; Andrew Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 7.

<sup>107</sup> John Laughland, *A History of Political Trials from Charles I to Saddam Hussein* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2008), 196.

<sup>108</sup> A. James McAdams, *Judging the Past in Unified Germany* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 2.

Thus, although the outside view may have been that the *Bundeswehr* was absorbing members of the NVA “more or less as equals,” there were heavy conditions for continued service that stemmed partly from the adversarial political relationship between the two states during their 40 years of division.<sup>109</sup> There is another argument for those conditions, however, that draws on the inherent differences in the nature of each state’s military. The argument has a counterfactual element suggesting that even if the two states had not been rivals in a Cold War context, the military of a liberal democracy like West Germany would not have been able to readily assimilate the military of a Communist dictatorship. The following section takes up this discussion.

### **Politics, Military Culture, and Unification:**

#### **The Irreconcilable Differences between the *Bundeswehr* and the NVA**

Just as war may be considered as the continuation of politics by other means, so the political character of each Germany during the Cold War shaped its respective instrument for war: the structure, character, and relationship to civilian society of each military.<sup>110</sup> Depending on the type of government, the manner and degree of political influence on the military may vary considerably. In this respect, the two Germanys provide a case study in contrasts such that large-scale assimilation of the NVA into the *Bundeswehr* after unification was not feasible.

From the outset in 1955, the FRG designed the *Bundeswehr* to uphold democratic institutions both in spirit and in law. The idea of “‘the citizen in uniform’...was to be the basis of the ethos and structure of the armed forces, breaking with German military tradition.”<sup>111</sup> Furthermore, a special defense committee within the *Bundestag*, the German Parliament, was responsible for ensuring the *Bundeswehr* was a “democratic organization.”<sup>112</sup> Although the citizen-centered focus of the new *Bundeswehr* did not initially settle well with the views of some older generation officers that entered into it,

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<sup>109</sup> Gordon, “German Unification and the Bundeswehr,” 28.

<sup>110</sup> Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, indexed (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 87.

<sup>111</sup> Guenther Kloss, *West Germany: An Introduction* (New York: Halsted Press, 1976), 55-6.

<sup>112</sup> Guenther Kloss, *West Germany: An Introduction* (New York: Halsted Press, 1976), 56.

by the time of unification the *Bundeswehr* had “truly matured as a military force grounded in liberal, democratic principles.”<sup>113</sup>

Much of the organization’s operational culture rests on the *Bundeswehr* concepts of *Innere Führung* and *Auftragstaktik*. The former concept, literally meaning “inner command,” is “part leadership style and part civic education of the soldier, intended to strengthen his understanding and acceptance of the German civil-military relationship.”<sup>114</sup> The latter concept, translated literally as “mission tactics,” advocates clear understanding of objectives and commander’s intent in carrying out orders, as well as freedom of action and initiative.<sup>115</sup> Taken together, these principles foster an active, participant military culture with a degree of moral accountability on all levels.

This military culture helped smooth the *Bundeswehr* takeover of the NVA in two ways. First, it gave the *Bundeswehr* considerable latitude and flexibility for the process. The lack of a precedent for the events of unification prevented Bonn from controlling the takeover process explicitly at the start. Nevertheless, the sensitivity of the process might have led Bonn to take a more active role as events progressed, if it were not for the expectation that the *Bundeswehr* possessed the ethics, initiative, and freedom of action to accomplish a takeover peacefully. Ultimately, the West German government provided only general political guidance and periodic intervention.<sup>116</sup>

Second, as citizen-soldiers, leaders of the *Bundeswehr* were comfortable interacting with the East German population. *Bundeswehr* allowed East Germans onto NVA bases so they could personally see what was transpiring, established contacts with “civilian authorities at all levels,” and “worked especially closely with the employment offices and regional industries in an effort to find jobs for the many soldiers who were leaving the armed forces.”<sup>117</sup> Besides providing employment prospects for the NVA, these efforts assuaged East German suspicion about *Bundeswehr* intentions.

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<sup>113</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People’s (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 141.

<sup>114</sup> Deron Jackson, “A True Political Instrument? The Current German Debate on the Role of Force,” MALD Paper (Tufts University, Fall 1996), 9.

<sup>115</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People’s (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 43.

<sup>116</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People’s (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 77.

<sup>117</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 185.



The military culture of the NVA stood in stark contrast to that of the *Bundeswehr*. First, loyalty was to the SED and socialism, not principles of law in the Western sense.<sup>118</sup> Understanding the NVA, therefore, is dependent largely on “the manifestation of...relevant ideological doctrine.”<sup>119</sup> Second, the NVA required blind obedience to orders; “discrimination and repression of the more junior” enlisted members of the NVA discouraged questioning them.<sup>120</sup> Third, the NVA emphasized technical competence in a specialty over the development of leadership among its non-commissioned officers.<sup>121</sup> Taken together, these characteristics suggest the NVA was a subject rather than a participant military culture.

This culture put a large handicap on the average NVA member once the *Bundeswehr* took over, and the West German armed forces demanded that he overcome it if he wanted to continue serving in the military. First, because the NVA NCO corps consisted mostly of specialists that had no command authority, the *Bundeswehr* required NCOs who desired to serve under the *Bundeswehr* to undergo extensive training under its own corps. The *Bundeswehr* dispatched 850 of its NCOs to Eastern lands for this purpose.<sup>122</sup>

Second, for all members who volunteered for a two-year trial service period, the *Bundeswehr* required a process of evaluation, reeducation, and socialization to erase the distinction between the NVA and its own culture.<sup>123</sup> *Bundeswehr* supervisors evaluated former NVA personnel semiannually based on character, potential, and performance, in that order of priority.<sup>124</sup> Education and socialization centered on the aforementioned

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<sup>118</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 164.

<sup>119</sup> Thomas M. Forster, *The East German Army: The Second Power in the Warsaw Pact* (London, England: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1980), 17.

<sup>120</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 164.

<sup>121</sup> Jarausch and Gransow, eds., *Uniting Germany: Documents and Debates, 1944-1993*, 248; Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 106.

<sup>122</sup> Jarausch and Gransow, eds., *Uniting Germany: Documents and Debates, 1944-1993*, 248; Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 106.

<sup>123</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 152.

<sup>124</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 113.



concepts of *Innere Führung* and *Auftragstaktik*.<sup>125</sup> Through voluntary or forced separation, this process weeded out many *Bundeswehr* candidates, and it combined with limitations on age, rank, and previous association to severely limit the percentage of former-NVA members in the *Bundeswehr* after 1990.

### **Summary of Inter-German Political Factors:**

#### **The Fate of the NVA and the Character of the *Bundeswehr* in United Germany**

Despite such limitations and the relatively antagonistic relations between East and West Germany for four decades, practical political considerations in 1990 required that at least some NVA members continue to serve. “Bonn feared that total exclusion of East Germans from the military would alienate the population and contribute to the unemployment problem. Former NVA members would help Germany immediately exert sovereignty and avoid creating a security vacuum...in the East. Moreover, they would also help provide security for the vast holdings of weapons, ammunition, and facilities.”<sup>126</sup> Regardless of whether the *Bundeswehr* would continue to need such supplies, it was necessary to dispose of them somehow. For the long term, furthermore, “the *Bundeswehr* could not have pretended to be a truly German (all-German) army had it not allowed a portion of the NVA to continue to serve.”<sup>127</sup>

Overall, the discussion of how political factors affected the fate of the NVA and the method by which the *Bundeswehr* assimilated some NVA members into its ranks demonstrates four assertions about the connection between politics and the military that have transfer value to other unification scenarios. First, even though the two Germanys did not go to war and were culturally similar, the dominant side in unification may choose to prosecute leaders from the other side if it perceives significant legal or moral fault. It may be possible that cultural affinity actually led to a more thorough investigation of such faults. Second, as revealed in the spiral of perception and misperception, political rivalry between states can cause the military of one side to paint a picture of the other that draws on negative associations beyond those that actually exist.

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<sup>125</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 43.

<sup>126</sup> Gordon, “German Unification and the Bundeswehr,” 21.

<sup>127</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 95.

Third, and as a response to the second point, it is possible to retain some personnel without retaining the military culture they came from. The FRG determined that the length of time for erasing this culture from the *Bundeswehr* as it absorbed NVA personnel should be two years. The length of time in another scenario may be more or less depending on the duration of political separation and the character of the rivalry between the two sides. Fourth and finally, as the first paragraph of this summary suggests, practical definitions of state interest may override deterrents to including members of the losing state's military in the dominant state's ranks. In spite of the previous relationship between the two militaries and the stark distinctions in their military cultures, the conception of a united Germany in the emerging European social and political framework dictated the assimilation of some NVA members into the *Bundeswehr*.

### **The Legacy of the *Bundeswehr* takeover**

An analysis of geopolitical influence on the fate of the NVA and the makeup of the new *Bundeswehr* would be incomplete without considering the reverse effect. Two characteristics of the *Bundeswehr* takeover—the speed of the process and the absence of violence accompanying it—preserved domestic security in the former GDR, prevented unwanted interference by outside powers, and helped preserve international stability.

Largely as a result of the peaceful dissolution of the East German military, the GDR withdrew from the Warsaw Pact a few days before unification, and the Pact itself dissolved five months later. Considering that only a year earlier GDR Defense Minister Rainer Eppelmann had argued that traditional opposition between NATO and the Warsaw Pact required two separate German armies during the unification process, these events appear unprecedented.<sup>128</sup> Although the warming of relations between Gorbachev and Kohl helped obviate the need for the Warsaw Pact, any outbreak of violence between the *Bundeswehr* and the NVA as the takeover proceeded would have undermined Soviet reforms and justified the continued existence of the Warsaw Pact. Most significantly, “a

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<sup>128</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 127-8.

hardline coup could have well succeeded in the USSR—with all the implications such an action would have had for Europe and the world.”<sup>129</sup>



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<sup>129</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 29.

## Chapter 4

### The Unification of Vietnam in 1975

North and South Vietnam officially became unified on June 8, 1975, when the Democratic Republic (North Vietnamese) National Assembly called for political union of the two sides and named Hanoi as capital of the new state.<sup>1</sup> The announcement closely followed the North's military conquest of South Vietnam, the most visible symbol of which had been the overrunning of Saigon, the former capital of South Vietnam, on 30 April. That morning, South Vietnamese President Duong Van Minh "offered the unconditional surrender of all forces under his command."<sup>2</sup> The surrender marked the conclusion of the Second Indochina War, also called the American War by the Vietnamese and the Vietnam War by the United States. With the surrender began the process of "building socialism in a unified Vietnam."<sup>3</sup>

Three notable characteristics marked the unification process in Vietnam. The first was that the North's military conquest and subsequent unification of the country was the culmination of years of planning and expectation by Vietnamese Communist leaders. Although these leaders sometimes differed in their operational military recommendations during the final months of the takeover, they had sought military unification of the country for some time. The earliest record of the Communist strategy for governing Vietnam may be Ho Chi Minh's 1930 initial draft of the Party policy for the Vietnamese Revolution.<sup>4</sup> French accounts from the late 1940s reveal that Viet Minh military leader (and later People's Army of Vietnam, or PAVN commander) Vo Nguyen Giap "was becoming convinced that war was inevitable" for accomplishing the policy's goals.<sup>5</sup> Although Hanoi bowed to "pressure to negotiate the Geneva accords" that ended the First Indochina War in 1954, North Vietnamese party records by the early 1960s outlined "the necessity of defeating the enemy's military forces in order to achieve

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<sup>1</sup> John C. Donnell, "South Vietnam in 1975: The Year of Communist Victory," *Asian Survey* 16, no. 1, A Survey of Asia in 1975: Part I (January 1976), 10.

<sup>2</sup> Carlyle A. Thayer, "North Vietnam in 1975: National Liberation, Reunification and Socialist Construction," *Asian Survey* 16, no. 1, A Survey of Asia in 1975: Part I (January 1976), 17.

<sup>3</sup> Thayer, "North Vietnam in 1975," 22.

<sup>4</sup> Douglas Pike, *PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1986), 14.

<sup>5</sup> Martin Windrow, *The Last Valley: Dien Bien Phu and the French Defeat in Vietnam* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2006), 88.

victory in the revolution” and unify the country under Communism.<sup>6</sup> Prior to his death in 1969, Ho Chi Minh affirmed this last expectation in his final testament: “Our fellow-countrymen in the South and in the North will certainly be reunited under the same roof.”<sup>7</sup>

The second characteristic was that political unification took place very quickly following the military takeover of South Vietnam. Stark differences in the two sides’ social systems, “popular attitudes that unification was at least five years away,” and application by both North and South to join the UN separately suggested a slow transition to a unified state.<sup>8</sup> Less than 90 days transpired between the South’s military surrender in Saigon, however, and the DRV National Assembly’s call for the economic, social, and political integration of South Vietnam into a greater state. National elections to determine the new leadership in the south were set for less than a year later, in April 1976.<sup>9</sup>

The third characteristic was that because of its initialization by military force, violence accompanied the unification process. Organized military combat proceeded up until the surrender of Saigon, and there are records of vengeance killings against South Vietnamese public authorities afterward.<sup>10</sup> To counter looting and lawlessness that erupted after the takeover, the new government also staged public executions of those found guilty.<sup>11</sup> More generally, “Hanoi’s swift integration of the South into a Communist unified whole confirmed the worst fears of many foreign leaders. For over three decades, Western leaders had charged that the Communists wanted to take Vietnam by force. For American officials, Hanoi’s immediate postwar actions were proof enough that they had been right all along.”<sup>12</sup> These postwar actions included imprisoning countless members of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN).

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<sup>6</sup> Alice Lyman Miller, *Becoming Asia: Change and Continuity in Asian International Relations since World War II* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2011), 138, 143.

<sup>7</sup> Thayer, “North Vietnam in 1975: National Liberation, Reunification and Socialist Construction,” 14.

<sup>8</sup> Donnell, “South Vietnam in 1975: The Year of Communist Victory,” 10.

<sup>9</sup> Robert K. Brigham, *Guerrilla Diplomacy: The NLF’s Foreign Relations and the Viet Nam War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 129.

<sup>10</sup> George J. Veith, *Black April: The Fall of South Vietnam, 1973-1975*, 1st American ed (New York: Encounter Books, 2012), 495.

<sup>11</sup> Donnell, “South Vietnam in 1975: The Year of Communist Victory,” 6-7.

<sup>12</sup> Brigham, *Guerrilla Diplomacy*, 130.

### **The Fate of the ARVN**

The new government's integration of South Vietnam into its political system did not include a plan for assimilating the ARVN into the ranks of the PAVN. On the other hand, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) did have certain conditional means of recruiting ARVN members into its ranks. The conditions depended on the stage of the unification process, the member's rank, and the "crime" of which he was guilty.

All three of these distinctions are evident in the changing policies of the DRV's Interior Ministry as active combat progressed towards Saigon. In January of 1975, the North Vietnamese Interior Ministry laid out a secret policy advocating that their officials and soldiers enter "liberated zones...to punish stubborn leaders," which included ARVN officers from the rank of captain up.<sup>13</sup> Depending on the perceived crime, punishment might include arrest, trial, death, imprisonment, or reeducation. By April, however, the ministry's policy had changed. It incentivized desertion or surrender among ARVN forces by offering them "the same 'rights' as Communist soldiers." Furthermore, captured ARVN officers would now "be detained for supervision, education, and labor."<sup>14</sup>

After government-sanctioned combat ended, this policy was generalized for all ARVN members. "All former Army men were required to register by an extended May 31, [1975] deadline...and then they and former civil officials were sent to political training centers" without notice.<sup>15</sup> Although it is impossible to confirm exact numbers, accounts from ARVN members sent to these centers suggest that "several hundred thousand prisoners were housed in some 150 camps and sub camps, often located at ex-ARVN bases." In principle, these camps alternated periods of labor with Communist indoctrination.<sup>16</sup>

Although many returned to their families, officers were generally gone much longer than enlisted personnel, especially if they refused to be reeducated into the socialist

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<sup>13</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 473.

<sup>14</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 473.

<sup>15</sup> Donnell, "South Vietnam in 1975: The Year of Communist Victory," 6.

<sup>16</sup> Andrew A. Wiest, *Vietnam's Forgotten Army: Heroism and Betrayal in the ARVN* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 282.

system. Some were not released until 1987.<sup>17</sup> Their accounts speak of poor treatment and working conditions. “Grim stories circulated of corpses of some trainees being shipped home with explanations suggesting they had been killed while working to clear unexploded bombs and possibly mines from former combat areas.”<sup>18</sup> Within a post-war prison network known as the Bamboo Gulag, “hundreds of thousands of military and civilian prisoners worked hard labor in the jungle with little food, medicine, or clothing. The death toll was in the thousands.”<sup>19</sup>

Naturally, those ARVN who agreed to be reeducated avoided such fates. Some taught their former peers at the political training centers.<sup>20</sup> Others even became candidates for political office in the South after they regained their citizenship.<sup>21</sup>

Regardless, all ARVN who survived the war did not undergo reeducation. Many escaped from Vietnam, either to live in refugee camps or—if they were particularly lucky—to join with family members in a new country.<sup>22</sup> Some ARVN members who escaped returned to join one of several guerilla resistance efforts against the new government. Although some of these movements have lasted for decades, they have so far proven ineffectual. The DRV initially dealt with the movements militarily, but more recently it has developed counter-organizational strategies that either infiltrate them or coopt them into the socialist system.<sup>23</sup>

### **The Character of the PAVN in Unified Vietnam**

In light of the circumstances above, the former ARVN had little to no impact on the composition and character of the PAVN except to challenge its authority in the opening days of the new regime. This challenge, along with the need to confront external threats and build a socialist nation-state, played into the arguments of generals for the PAVN to remain the DRV’s primary instrument of power.

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<sup>17</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 495.

<sup>18</sup> Donnell, “South Vietnam in 1975: The Year of Communist Victory,” 6.

<sup>19</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 495.

<sup>20</sup> Wiest, *Vietnam’s Forgotten Army*, 284-5.

<sup>21</sup> Sung An Tai, “The All-Vietnam National Assembly: Significant Developments,” *Asian Survey* 17, no. 5 (May 1977), 433.

<sup>22</sup> Robert K. Brigham, *ARVN: Life and Death in the South Vietnamese Army* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 126.

<sup>23</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 77-82.



First, pacifying internal resistance in the South following unification demanded a responsive, centrally controlled military force. Although the DRV's Communist Party set the policy for such activities as "rounding up former ARVN personnel" and "confiscating weapons and subversive literature," the PAVN carried them out.<sup>24</sup> The Vietnamese Politburo reorganized the PAVN to accomplish these tasks and directed it to assume responsibility for them from the People's Liberation Armed Forces (PLAF). This southern-based force had grown out of the largely guerilla National Liberation Front (NLF) that Hanoi had secretly employed as an arm of its unification strategy throughout the Second Indochina War.<sup>25</sup> In the drive for central control, the DRV directed the PAVN to assimilate all PLAF forces into its ranks. By the summer of 1976, the PAVN officially closed down the PLAF and absorbed most of its 350,000 members.<sup>26</sup>

Second, no sooner had the DRV begun integrating the South into its socialist system, two external threats demanded a continued high level of war readiness. Once an ally of North Vietnam, Cambodia's Khmer Rouge was now a source of political tension and the inciter behind several military incursions on the Vietnamese border. China also became a national security concern as the DRV drew closer to the Soviet Union in the widening Sino-Soviet split of the late 1970s.<sup>27</sup>

Third, generals with a voice in the new regime viewed the PAVN as the primary instrument by which to construct a socialist state. Upon military victory in Saigon, PAVN Chief of Staff General Van Tien Dung promoted "a revolutionary, modern standing army which could protect the independence, long-lasting peace, and socialist construction of the Fatherland."<sup>28</sup> General Giap also acknowledged the military's role in economic tasks for building a strong socialist state. Toward these ends, military leadership sought ways to build "popular support for the armed forces" and increase "individual soldiers' sense of 'socialist patriotism'."<sup>29</sup> By the Fourth Party Congress in December 1976, such arguments won out over the objection of those

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<sup>24</sup> Douglas Pike, "Vietnam during 1976: Economics in Command," *Asian Survey*, 17, no. 1, A Survey of Asia in 1976: Part I (January 1977), 37.

<sup>25</sup> Thayer, "North Vietnam in 1975: National Liberation, Reunification and Socialist Construction," 15.

<sup>26</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam*, 63.

<sup>27</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 191-2.

<sup>28</sup> Van Tien Dung, *Our Great Spring Victory: An Account of the Liberation of South Vietnam*, trans. John Jr. Spragens (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977), 259.

<sup>29</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam*, 63, 65.

who wished to demobilize the PAVN. At the Congress, the government declared that the PAVN should “dedicate itself to the ‘single strategic mission of carrying out the socialist revolution and building socialism’.”<sup>30</sup>

Although the threats from Cambodia and China caused priorities to shift within a couple years, the net effects of all three tasks ranged from a surge in the draft to a “process of perpetual reorganization” in the PAVN.<sup>31</sup> The former trend helped produce in Vietnam the fourth largest active military force in the world.<sup>32</sup> The latter trend both reflected and contributed to competition between factions in the government over “what sort of military force PAVN ought to become.”<sup>33</sup> Clearly, it could not be the best instrument both for external security and construction of a socialist state.

### **External Influence on the Fate of the ARVN and the Character of a Unified PAVN**

Any discussion of factors that contributed to the fate of the ARVN must first relate them to the military outcome of the Second Indochina War. The reason is that “the Communist offensive...remains the primary reason for South Vietnam’s demise,” and hence the demise of the ARVN.<sup>34</sup> External factors rooted in the geopolitics of powers with interest in the region played a role in both outcomes.

This section looks first at the relationship between South Vietnam and the United States, the RVN’s primary patron. Because this relationship was one of strong dependency, the removal of US assistance in its different forms played a large role in the ARVN’s demise. Breaking this section into the period before and after Vietnamization in 1969 clarifies the effects of the departure of US personnel, the absence of firepower, and the vast reduction in financial and material aid. Because the rise of the PAVN after the war’s end—the second dependent variable—appears to have risen independently of any American influence in the region, the first section does not discuss it.

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<sup>30</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 298.

<sup>31</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 62, 64.

<sup>32</sup> Pike, “Vietnam during 1976: Economics in Command,” 41

<sup>33</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 133.

<sup>34</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 6.

The second section, however, addresses both variables by examining the relationship between North Vietnam and its two primary benefactors, the Soviet Union and China. How the relationship among these three contributes to the demise of the ARVN and shapes the post-war PAVN emerges partly from the Cold War dynamics among the United States, the Soviet Union, and China in the 1970s. Therefore, this section considers the indirect effects of these dynamics as well.

### **Vietnamese Dependency on the United States, 1950-1969**

In the two decades before President Nixon's Vietnamization policy, US support to the South Vietnamese government and the ARVN established a degree of dependency that would later handicap both entities against Communist forces and ultimately contribute to their demise. Viewed another way, US engagement in an escalated stalemate with North Vietnam simply postponed the fall of South Vietnam to Communist forces.

Cold War containment policy made American support to Vietnam appear necessary from the beginning. The realization that the Viet Minh had a "Communist core" and the mounting tension with the Soviet Union that accompanied the onset of the Korean War led President Truman to send military advisors and money to combined French and Vietnamese forces in 1950.<sup>35</sup> The fall of Laos to Communist military forces in 1961 and the Pentagon conclusion that Vietnam was "the only place in the world where the Administration faced a well-developed Communist effort to topple a pro-Western government with an externally aided pro-Communist insurgency" made it "a challenge that could hardly be ignored."<sup>36</sup>

Considering this view, an open-ended escalation was the inevitable outcome against a foe whose clear goal was unification of the country. American manpower statistics are telling: The 1950 advisory team consisted of 35 personnel, whereas by 1968 500,000 Americans were in Vietnam.<sup>37</sup> This "intervention had a meaningful

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<sup>35</sup> Windrow, *The Last Valley*, 86-7; David C. Whitney, *Two Dynamic Decades: A Pictorial History of the Space Age Generation*, ed. Thomas C. Jones (Chicago: J. C. Ferguson Publishing Company, 1967), 130.

<sup>36</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 142.

<sup>37</sup> Whitney, *Two Dynamic Decades: A Pictorial History of the Space Age Generation*, 130; Wiest, *Vietnam's Forgotten Army*, 230;

effect in reversing a seriously deteriorating situation produced by political instability in the South,” but by obliging itself to such a degree America also “created a dependence that eventually ill served its South Vietnamese allies.”<sup>38</sup>

This dependence had two detrimental effects on South Vietnam’s ability to conduct a successful war. First, the ARVN came to rely on US personnel as the vessels for the lifeblood of their campaign. ARVN operations “had come to be predicated on the availability of generous funds and materiel during the tutelage of their American advisors.”<sup>39</sup> Second, the RVN government acceded to US initiative in the war effort and had little motivation to reform within. Saigon “had been shaped to respond primarily to the American interest in continuing the war and the use of a compliant but corrupt and ineffective military leadership for this purpose.”<sup>40</sup> Against the North’s massive native mobilization and revolutionary aims, these weaknesses by the army and the government led to increasing instability.<sup>41</sup>

Following the Tet Offensive, the string of military victories in which American firepower played a major role disguised such weaknesses, and RVN leadership did little to fix them. Rather than pursue military reforms while US assistance was ample, RVN President Nguyen Van Thieu used the time to purge his government of political enemies.<sup>42</sup> In the absence of meaningful change, the ARVN was ill-prepared to fight on its own once the American policy of Vietnamization took effect.

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<sup>38</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 147-9.

<sup>39</sup> Donnell, “South Vietnam in 1975: The Year of Communist Victory,” 11.

<sup>40</sup> Donnell, “South Vietnam in 1975: The Year of Communist Victory,” 11-12.

<sup>41</sup> Donnell, “South Vietnam in 1975: The Year of Communist Victory,” 12.

<sup>42</sup> Wiest, *Vietnam’s Forgotten Army*, 178.

## **Vietnamization and the Demise of the ARVN**

Coming to power amid the American public's waning enthusiasm for US participation in the Indochina War in 1969, the Nixon administration sought through Vietnamization to "reverse the process of American escalation while strengthening the Saigon regime so that it could contest with the Communists the political future of the South."<sup>43</sup> Military victories prior to the US departure, such as the response to the PAVN's 1972 Easter Offensive, suggested the ARVN was still a competent force. However, the departure of US forces in 1973 more than halved the military manpower in the South and left the ARVN with a fraction of its previous firepower.<sup>44</sup> Besides the failure of the past 20 years to prepare the ARVN for fighting on its own, the absence of these assets made it much more vulnerable to mistakes in intelligence and planning.

The inability of the ARVN's more limited assets to cover all anticipated PAVN targets combined with faulty intelligence to accelerate the North's push to Saigon by 1975. First, the ARVN leadership mistakenly believed that the PAVN was going to attack the II Corps headquarters at Pleiku in early March. Even after enemy units launched an assault on the provincial capital of Ban Me Thuot to the south instead, the II Corps commander still believed it was only a diversion. American reconnaissance support may have prevented this mistake, yet US forces would still have likely provided assistance to beleaguered forces at Ban Me Thuot. Instead, the post fell to Communist forces.<sup>45</sup>

After the defeat at Ban Me Thuot, events took a more significant turn for the worse. A decision by President Thieu revealed that even a retreat on the basis of sound strategy could be devastating to both the ARVN and the civilian population, with consequences for the outcome of the war. Realizing that he no longer had the US air support necessary to hold South Vietnam's northern highlands, Thieu ordered his commanders to vacate the region in favor of defending the cities closer to the coast. The lack of planning for such an action and poor ground conditions greatly slowed ARVN movement. Furthermore, because thousands of refugees followed the

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<sup>43</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 151.

<sup>44</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 48-9.

<sup>45</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 141-4, 165.

military out of the highlands, North Vietnamese forces picked up the trail.<sup>46</sup> The disorderly retreat in the face of PAVN attacks became a rout, and it helped clear the path for the Communist drive to Saigon.<sup>47</sup> In view of the consequences, the commander of all South Vietnamese military forces at the time later described the decision to make the retreat as “the most critical juncture of the entire war.”<sup>48</sup>

Although Thieu continued to make aid requests to the United States as these unfortunate events unfolded, two factors prevented his regime from receiving more than scant financial and material assistance after US troops departed. First, “like most observers, the American intelligence community believed that “barring a psychological collapse ... the GVN will survive the communist dry season campaign.”<sup>49</sup> Second, although the Ford administration argued that “without U.S. aid, South Vietnam could not survive,” “a recalcitrant Congress and a stagnant economy” blocked his efforts to assist Thieu.<sup>50</sup>

In the view of the RVN and its military forces, by refusing to support Vietnam in its hour of greatest need the United States was disregarding Nixon’s pledge of crisis intervention. That Nixon was no longer in office and Congress had subsequently banned military operations in Vietnam mattered little to the ARVN.<sup>51</sup> The absence of fire support to stem the influx of Communist forces and the precipitous drop in US aid combined to destroy South Vietnamese morale, and Thieu’s error in directing the retreat from the northern highlands exacerbated the situation. Together, these effects are also largely responsible for the collapse of ARVN resistance and the Communist takeover of the country.<sup>52</sup>

After North Vietnam completed its military offensive, removed the ARVN threat, and established some degree of security in the South, it faced the decision of how to restructure the PAVN to meet its needs. The United States had lost its last trace of influence in South Vietnam with the departure of its ambassador the morning the PAVN

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<sup>46</sup> Lewis Sorley, ed., *The Vietnam War: An Assessment by South Vietnam’s Generals*, Modern Southeast Asia Series (Lubbock, Tex: Texas Tech University Press, 2010), 807-8

<sup>47</sup> Thayer, “North Vietnam in 1975: National Liberation, Reunification and Socialist Construction,” 17.

<sup>48</sup> Sorley, *The Vietnam War: An Assessment by South Vietnam’s Generals*, , 804.

<sup>49</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 220.

<sup>50</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 81, 182.

<sup>51</sup> Donnell, “South Vietnam in 1975: The Year of Communist Victory,” 11-12.

<sup>52</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 6, 497.



rolled into Saigon. Nevertheless, the fear of future US involvement in the region played a role in the decision of at least two DRV army generals not to demobilize the PAVN. In his book, *Our Great Spring Victory*, PAVN Chief of Staff Van Tien Dung wrote: “The U.S. imperialists have been defeated in Vietnam, but their dark schemes have not ended. Along with the forces of reaction, they have constantly sought means to destroy the fruits of our revolution. They have constantly interfered most viciously, and engaged in the most savage destruction. So we must raise our vigilance and build a mighty national defense, a powerful army ready for battle and always with a high will to win, in order to protect our Fatherland.”<sup>53</sup>

Although General Giap did not target the United States directly, his opinion likewise reflected the concern for external threats: “Vietnam must become a major industrial and military power...there could be no significant demobilization...PAVN must reach new heights of military preparedness.”<sup>54</sup> Giap’s views held considerable sway in 1975 when the Vietnamese Workers’ Party (VWP) met to decide the PAVN’s future. As a result of the arguments of Giap and similarly-minded generals, the Party backed away from plans for a large demobilization and elected instead to continue a nationwide military draft and allocate more money to modernize the PAVN.<sup>55</sup> Although external threats closer to home soon reinforced these decisions, the United States had left a lasting imprint on the minds of Vietnamese Communists.

### **North Vietnam, the Soviet Union, and China**

Like the United States in its support for South Vietnam, China and the Soviet Union also contributed to the Communist cause in the North. Both powers conceived of their national interest regarding Vietnam within the context of Cold War relationships. Unlike the United States, however, while both were interested in affecting the outcome of the Second Indochina War, they did not actively commit troops for active combat. Rather, they used other military, financial, and diplomatic measures to effect a Communist victory while preventing a wider international conflict. These measures proved largely successful in that there was no foreign military obstruction to the PAVN’s

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<sup>53</sup> Dung, *Our Great Spring Victory: An Account of the Liberation of South Vietnam*, 258-9.

<sup>54</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 65.

<sup>55</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 64.



victory in 1975—a victory that it achieved largely through the use of equipment from both China and the Soviet Union. This victory assured the end of the ARVN and the freedom to craft a post-war PAVN that paved the way for socialism in South Vietnam.

For the Soviet Union, its national interest in Vietnam meant affecting the outcome of the war in a way that would strengthen its international position. The superpower accomplished this for much of the conflict by providing military equipment and aid to North Vietnam.<sup>56</sup> It stopped short of committing its forces directly into combat in the struggle, however, because of its “need to avert world war in the nuclear age.”<sup>57</sup> Khrushchev had foreseen this hazard as early as 1961, when he warned against direct military involvement by the superpowers.<sup>58</sup>

Although North Vietnam’s relationship with China was more complex, the two countries’ shared socialist philosophy encouraged the PRC to make large contributions to the DRV’s war efforts as well: \$20 billion in economic and military aid between 1950 and 1978 in addition to 320,000 members of the Red Army for support.<sup>59</sup> Like the Soviet Union, however, China did not want to incite a confrontation with the United States.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, the 1969 Sino-Soviet border dispute required a large commitment of Red Army forces in the North. Recognizing that it could not afford a two-front war, China backed off from any threats of intervention in North Vietnam following the dispute. Détente with the United States after 1971 further eliminated any chance that China would intervene.<sup>61</sup>

Despite these restrictions, each great power had several means to affect the outcome of the war in ways that strengthened its power and ultimately assisted the PAVN’s military victory. To demonstrate support for its Communist allies, as early as 1969 the Soviet Union diplomatically recognized the People’s Revolutionary Government (PRG), an arm of the NLF. The Soviet government permitted the PRG to open a mission in Moscow, and it endorsed the PRG’s presentation of Hanoi’s four-

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<sup>56</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 147.

<sup>57</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 141.

<sup>58</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 140.

<sup>59</sup> Bruce A. Elleman, *Modern China: Continuity and Change 1644 to the Present* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2010), 413.

<sup>60</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 51-2.

<sup>61</sup> Bruce A. Elleman, *Modern China: Continuity and Change 1644 to the Present* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2010), 402.

point proposal...for a Vietnam settlement.<sup>62</sup> Soviet support for the PRG had symbolic value for Hanoi's confidence in facing Nixon's ultimatums for a negotiated settlement while the PAVN was not yet strong enough to invade South Vietnam.<sup>63</sup>

In 1971, the Sino-Soviet split proved directly beneficial to the DRV. China sought to strengthen its position against the Soviet Union that year by significantly increasing its military aid to North Vietnam. Not to be left out of the competition, the Soviet Union shortly responded by increasing its military shipments as well. One author suggests that after 1971, "Russian-made tanks played an important role in the Communists' success."<sup>64</sup>

Although China's improved relations with the United States and pending US-Soviet arms control agreements gave Hanoi little choice but to negotiate a settlement with America by May 1972, the diplomatic power of the NLF and years of military support from its two patrons allowed the DRV to negotiate from a position of strength.<sup>65</sup> When Hanoi and the NLF finally agreed to the 1973 Paris Accords with the United States, it was because both concluded that "international public opinion and the US Congress now demanded that the Nixon administration produce a final settlement."<sup>66</sup>

For the North Vietnamese government, the 1973 Paris agreement was a short term sacrifice to achieve its long term goal of unification. The terms of the accords required the PAVN to cease its military offensive in favor of "discussions and agreements" about the reunification of the country.<sup>67</sup> Meanwhile, however, even as the Communists were "publicly proclaiming that their main interest lay in building the Northern economy," they "were secretly organizing to resume the war."<sup>68</sup> When rumors circulated in the North following the signing of the accords that the United States continued to supply various kinds of military equipment to the South, the DRV justified continuing its offensive. As General Dung wrote, "we told Kissinger frankly that it was America that had seriously violated the Paris Agreement on Vietnam, continuing its neocolonial war of

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<sup>62</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 147.

<sup>63</sup> Brigham, *Guerrilla Diplomacy*, 88-92.

<sup>64</sup> Brigham, *Guerrilla Diplomacy*, 102.

<sup>65</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 155.

<sup>66</sup> Brigham, *Guerrilla Diplomacy*, 111.

<sup>67</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 157.

<sup>68</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 63-4.

aggression. It was completely unreasonable for the United States to violate the agreement intentionally and cynically and yet demand that we respect the agreement.”<sup>69</sup>

In retrospect, therefore, the Paris Accords, which China and the Soviet Union had fostered, ultimately helped open up the path for the Communist victory. First, it removed any US presence from the country. Once America had its “peace with honor,” it called its military forces back home.<sup>70</sup> As mentioned previously, the departure raised PAVN confidence, and Dung’s belief that US domestic conditions would make it difficult for America to rejoin the conflict proved true.<sup>71</sup> Second, with the PRG no longer needed to conduct diplomatic missions, the NLF concentrated on putting military and political pressure on Saigon. “The Thieu regime had relied on military strength and technological superiority to hide its political weakness,” explained a former [NLF] military official in 1995, “but by March 1974 we had taken away that advantage and left the Saigon administration open for political attack from within.”<sup>72</sup> Thus, the ARVN’s demise on the battlefield can be traced partly back to an agreement sponsored by China and the Soviet Union that gave ARVN adversaries on both sides of the 17<sup>th</sup> parallel a free hand to fight the war on their terms and put political pressure on an already weak government in Saigon.

Soviet military support strengthened this free hand as the PAVN swept south towards Saigon, and the United States recognized its impotence in the face of these moves. “As Danang fell, when told that the Soviets were to blame for supplying PAVN forces, Kissinger said, ‘we can’t ask the Soviets in the spirit of détente to save us from ourselves.’”<sup>73</sup> Meanwhile, there was a growing distance between the DRV and China over influence in Southeast Asia.

The emergence of China as an adversary was to play a large role in both the timing of the PAVN’s push to Saigon and the orientation of the PAVN after Communist victory. Regarding the former, a Vietnamese Politburo study offers valuable insight. Le Duan, the General Secretary of the DRV Communist Party, perceived that “the U.S. was now ‘colluding’ with China, permitting China to gain influence in Southeast Asia in

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<sup>69</sup> Dung, *Our Great Spring Victory: An Account of the Liberation of South Vietnam*, 258.

<sup>70</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 81.

<sup>71</sup> Dung, *Our Great Spring Victory: An Account of the Liberation of South Vietnam*, 19-20.

<sup>72</sup> Bringham, *Guerrilla Diplomacy*, 121.

<sup>73</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 326.

exchange for Chinese pressure on Hanoi to halt its attacks. Le Duan added that China and Japan would soon begin to ‘interfere’ in Southeast Asian matters, citing the Chinese invasion of the Paracel Islands as a prime example. However, since America and South Vietnam were currently weak, and China and Japan were not yet ready to act, Hanoi had a small window of opportunity to win the war. It needed to act immediately to take advantage of this situation, or the Politburo’s goal of unification would become extremely difficult to achieve.”<sup>74</sup> Vietnam expert Douglas Pike confirms this view in writing that “Mao Tse-Tung and the Chinese Communists never did truly want decisive Hanoi victory, for that would mean eventually some 50 million Indochinese with a long history of antipathy for China bound together under Hanoi leadership.”<sup>75</sup>

This view was not lost on the DRV as it sought to rebuild the PAVN after its 1975 victory. Along with putting down resistance in the South and confronting aggression from Pol Pot in Cambodia, the DRV sought to appear strong before its northern neighbor. Unfortunately, PAVN leaders had little experience thinking strategically about fighting a war against China.<sup>76</sup> When China invaded across the border in 1979, the PAVN was caught somewhat unaware. It relied heavily on the concept of the “combat village”—a “paramilitary force-administered, highly mobilized, self-contained static defense element, employing everyone in the village to harass an invading enemy and impede its advance.”<sup>77</sup> Although the PAVN sustained the 17-day conflict largely intact, it sustained high casualties.<sup>78</sup> Military leaders sought to prevent such losses in the future by building strategy in the years afterward for a more modern force that included airborne troops and airpower.<sup>79</sup>

The Chinese invasion and the “semi-Cold war” that China and Vietnam fought in the years afterward suggest that the power balance in Asia would continue to dictate the PAVN’s role in Vietnam.<sup>80</sup> First, despite the Chinese invasion taking place immediately after Vietnam’s invasion of Cambodia, at least one source declares the audience for the

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<sup>74</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 85.

<sup>75</sup> Pike, “Vietnam during 1976: Economics in Command,” 54.

<sup>76</sup> Pike, “Vietnam during 1976: Economics in Command,” 254-5.

<sup>77</sup> Pike, “Vietnam during 1976: Economics in Command,” 256.

<sup>78</sup> Elleman, *Modern China*, 414.

<sup>79</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 255-6.

<sup>80</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 267.

invasion was not Hanoi, but Moscow: China wanted to test the Soviet capital to make sure it would not “honor its treaty obligations to intervene on Vietnam’s behalf.”<sup>81</sup> Second, in view of traditional conflicts in Asia it appears that the Sino-Vietnamese relationship following the 1979 invasion “was not a war so much as it was a further effort by [China and Vietnam] to delineate their new relationship.”<sup>82</sup> In this sense, Vietnam was the new kid on the block, and China wanted to put it in its place. Vietnam would continue to shape the PAVN in response to such power plays in regional politics.

### **Political Factors between the Two Vietnams**

As with an analysis of external influence, any examination of how political factors between North and South Vietnam affected the ARVN and the PAVN in a united country must center on the Second Indochina War and its outcome. The nature of the war defined the political relationship of each side, and its outcome is partly traceable to basic political differences between them. Differences such as personal leadership abilities, the degree of political unity on each side, and civil-military relations all contributed to the North’s victory. However, these factors hinge largely on a broader, more important one: the incorporation of traditional Vietnamese nationalism into its political narrative. Drawing on definitions of a nation and how the Vietnamese saw their place in the world, this analysis proposes that the Communists crafted a narrative that had greater appeal to the population than the more Western-oriented government in Saigon. The result of this distinction for the two states’ respective militaries was a difference in motivations for fighting: the PAVN—and the NLF to some degree—drew greater inspiration from Vietnamese nationalism, while the ARVN fought primarily for family, particularly as the Second Indochina War neared its end. Because the PAVN perceived the war according to the political narrative, however, the ARVN to them was a tool of the West that needed to be reformed in the forge of Communism. Therefore, the same South Vietnamese soldiers that had fought for their families now became separated from them as they endured harsh conditions in reeducation camps. Foreseeing such a fate, some

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<sup>81</sup> Elleman, *Modern China*, 414.

<sup>82</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 75.

soldiers escaped the country or defected before the war's end—a decision the PAVN exploited to spread the political narrative in the South as it stabilized the region.

### **Vietnamese Identity and Political Narrative**

One element competing in the ideological battle between North and South Vietnam that impacted the motivation for those who fought on each side was their perception of the nation. The success of the political leadership on each side to weave a definition into its political narrative that rallied the population was in turn a key factor in the outcome of the Second Indochina War, and hence the fate of the ARVN.

Regardless of nationality, it is possible to view a nation as a largely unseen population held together by a common bond. In the competition for political loyalty in Vietnam in the years leading up to the 1975 Communist victory, two complementary understandings of this population prove helpful. One is Benedict Anderson's belief that a nation is "an imagined political community" that is "both inherently limited and sovereign."<sup>83</sup> The other is Ernest Renan's conception of the nation as a "large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and those that one is prepared to make in the future."<sup>84</sup>

The definitions are fitting because they emphasize the importance of a national narrative in political loyalty. Vietnam had never been a nation in the Western sense of the word, but the common perception among Vietnamese that they lived on "the most fought-over ground" and shared in the defense of that ground against enemies ranging from the Chinese to the French and the Khmer Rouge helped create an imagined community as the country modernized.<sup>85</sup> Anderson's idea that such communities are "limited" and "sovereign" also applied to Vietnam as early leaders such as Ho Chi Minh sought recognition from the world of Westphalian states sharing those qualities.<sup>86</sup>

The second definition also prioritizes national narrative, and it speaks to the motivation of the Vietnamese to join an armed force and fight for a national cause. Even if history shows that "the Vietnamese have endured warfare no more incessantly than

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<sup>83</sup> Benedict Anderson, "Imagined Communities," in *The Origins of Nationalism*, n.d., 48–59, <https://www2.bc.edu/marian-simion/.../0420anderson.pdf>, 49.

<sup>84</sup> Quoted in Brigham, *ARVN: Life and Death in the South Vietnamese Army*, 119.

<sup>85</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam*, 10, 14.

<sup>86</sup> Windrow, *The Last Valley*, 84.



have most of their Asian neighbors,” the national tradition that “every Vietnamese is a soldier...who is ever-ready to drop his hoe and march off to battle” against the latest invader is more important.<sup>87</sup> The outcome of a conflict between North and South Vietnam would hinge largely on which side could better wield this narrative in the long run.

The first clue that the Communists might win this battle is in the analysis of “early Vietnamese communist thought on the subject of military affairs,” where “it is difficult to separate Marxist and Leninist influences from traditional Vietnamese ideas.”<sup>88</sup> One of these ideas was *thoi coi*, which connotes “a profound, even mystical meaning about the appropriate moment for action.”<sup>89</sup> It is reminiscent of Clausewitz’ concept of *coup d’oeil*, a quality valued in military leadership that enables one to grasp reality swiftly and dictate affairs rather than be overcome by them.<sup>90</sup>

*Thoi coi* couched a somewhat deterministic Vietnamese belief that key points in history came along in which launching a military operation would be successful. This belief seems to have influenced Ho Chi Minh when he formed a conference in April 1945 “to consolidate all armed revolutionary groups” in the brief power vacuum between Japanese control and the attempt by the French to reassert influence.<sup>91</sup> It also appears in the words of Vo Nguyen Giap shortly afterward that he was building the PAVN awaiting “‘conditions ripe for armed violence’ and for ‘the worker-peasant masses under the Party’s command to seize power,’ as if this somehow were to occur spontaneously.”<sup>92</sup> Although Giap caged his explanation in terms that were not far off from Communist revolutionary ideas in Moscow and Beijing, his thoughts derived from Vietnamese heritage.<sup>93</sup> Just as importantly, the leader included the common people in his vision of armed revolution.

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<sup>87</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 9-10.

<sup>88</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 18.

<sup>89</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 18.

<sup>90</sup> Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, indexed (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 102, 578.

<sup>91</sup> Windrow, *The Last Valley*, 82.

<sup>92</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 19.

<sup>93</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 20.



The Communist narrative from the North resonated with the notion among the Vietnamese people that, like Prussia in Europe, they had always had to drive out foreign invaders.<sup>94</sup> The Party capitalized on this belief by making a concept called the Armed Propaganda Team central to the PAVN's strength. Armed Propaganda Teams "went into the villages of Vietnam to energize and motivate, to raise the villagers' revolutionary consciousness...by means of communication and persuasion."<sup>95</sup> Like other socialist revolutionary leaders, team leaders sought both to mobilize and organize the population against the government.

Although Party leadership sometimes deceived itself into believing that the entirety of South Vietnam was waiting to be liberated, the appeal reached non-communists as well as communists.<sup>96</sup> In this way, after its formation in 1960 with secret guidance and advice from Hanoi, the NLF became the depository of those in the South that did not necessarily ascribe to Ho Chi Minh's Revolution but who actively opposed the regime in Saigon. Although the NLF's goals fell short of unifying the country, as previously mentioned it attained diplomatic leverage for Hanoi in its efforts to remove US influence from the South.<sup>97</sup> Thus, Hanoi had powerful tools to spread a familiar national narrative and inspire the common people to join in resisting what it believed was a puppet government in the South.

The Saigon government's attempts to win over the population with a common narrative generally fell flat when up against the Communist message. First, although Vietnam's proud history owed much to families in the South, ties to the French or the Americans in both the government and ARVN leadership deprived Saigon of a persuasive historical narrative.<sup>98</sup> In particular, President Thieu lacked the reverent power that Ho Chi Minh had to spread an acceptable message of national unity. It did not help that he had to balance a higher diversity of "religious groups, political factions, and business interests" in addition to "the ever-present national security demands." Regardless, he earned a public reputation for political scheming and dividing his competitors against each other that robbed him of credibility in the

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<sup>94</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam*, 14.

<sup>95</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam*, 30.

<sup>96</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 314; Brigham, *Guerrilla Diplomacy*, 89.

<sup>97</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam*, 44, 48.

<sup>98</sup> Brigham, *ARVN: Life and Death in the South Vietnamese Army*, 119-21.

minds of common Vietnamese people.<sup>99</sup> ARVN officers recognized that these problems negatively affected the ARVN's struggle on the battlefield and presented an additional risk to soldiers' lives.<sup>100</sup>

Increasingly as the Second Indochina War dragged on, men joined and fought in the ARVN not for any imagined community or even opposition to communism, but for the safety and stability of their families. "What held [the ARVN] together in the face of enormous difficulties was a growing belief among soldiers that military service was actually a way to increase the odds that their individual families would survive intact."<sup>101</sup> Although this motivation might induce a soldier to fight valiantly—especially since ARVN members' families frequently accompanied them in their camps on campaigns—it was not conducive to national loyalty. In fact, one author describes the ARVN's culture as "subnational," presenting "'a third way' ...quite separate from the Saigon government or the Communists."<sup>102</sup>

This psychological detachment from the government weakened the ARVN as an instrument of war and discouraged people from joining. It could not subscribe to Renan's definition of a nation if its members did not view their role in terms of "past sacrifice and a desire to share a common future."<sup>103</sup> The problem manifested itself most clearly in the response to the military draft. The RVN government decided to restructure the draft in 1964 because of manpower shortages caused by draft dodgers. Even so, "at the end of 1965, a modest estimate put the number of draft dodgers at larger than 200,000."<sup>104</sup> Rural and urban alike had their reasons for avoiding the draft, albeit different. Those from the villages were often noncommittal because even though they were often "[favorably] disposed" toward the Saigon government, the adverse military state of affairs as the war progressed discouraged them from getting involved. On the other hand, urbanites were sheltered from the war, and they often benefitted from the US influx of money and a growing consumer culture. The

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<sup>99</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 26.

<sup>100</sup> Wiest, *Vietnam's Forgotten Army*, 6.

<sup>101</sup> Brigham, *ARVN: Life and Death in the South Vietnamese Army*, 110.

<sup>102</sup> Brigham, *ARVN: Life and Death in the South Vietnamese Army*, 109.

<sup>103</sup> Brigham, *ARVN: Life and Death in the South Vietnamese Army*, 119.

<sup>104</sup> Sorley, *The Vietnam War*, 288.

self-sacrifice required to leave the city and join an armed force in the jungles had little place in this culture.<sup>105</sup>

The RVN government's inability to unite such diverse sectors of the Vietnamese population under a common banner played into the hands of the enemy. As one former ARVN general wrote, "In time a true crisis of confidence set in because no one seemed to have the ability to lead. This led to the popular myth that only among the leading personalities of the other side were there any bright stars and heroic figures."<sup>106</sup> In the military arena, the aftermath of the war revealed that the opposite was true as well, with consequences for how the ARVN was treated.

### **The Fate of the ARVN and the Character of the PAVN in Unified Vietnam**

The PAVN's perception of the ARVN as a lackey of the US military contributed to the humiliation South Vietnamese soldiers received after the Communist takeover.<sup>107</sup> The PAVN often explained that South Vietnamese military members' indeterminate stay at reeducation camps was "the reward for having belonged to what officials in Hanoi called 'the rebel army'."<sup>108</sup> Even some ARVN leaders that had been jailed by the RVN government for failure to properly follow battlefield guidance did not escape several additional years in the DRV's reeducation camps, where officers and enlisted alike were subject to harsh labor in poor conditions.<sup>109</sup>

Although many ARVN escaped the country as the Communist takeover became imminent and their fate was clear, some pursued a third option that most closely approximated assimilation in the new regime. The realization by some in the ARVN "that South Vietnam would not be the engine of Vietnamese reunification" or "the guarantor of Vietnamese peace" led them to defect to the PAVN prior to the end of the conflict.<sup>110</sup> After the Communist takeover, it was possible for these defectors to become teachers at the camps their former peers attended. A typical message they taught

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<sup>105</sup> Sorley, *The Vietnam War*, 732-3.

<sup>106</sup> Sorley, *The Vietnam War*, 732.

<sup>107</sup> Brigham, *ARVN: Life and Death in the South Vietnamese Army*, 121.

<sup>108</sup> Brigham, *ARVN: Life and Death in the South Vietnamese Army*, 126.

<sup>109</sup> Wiest, *Vietnam's Forgotten Army*, 267-8.

<sup>110</sup> Wiest, *Vietnam's Forgotten Army*, 264.

might center on “the people’s struggle in revolutionary war and the meaning of Vietnamese independence,” although one defector claimed he mostly emphasized to his pupils the need to forget the past and cooperate for the good of the nation.<sup>111</sup> Regardless, ARVN defectors—arguably the only ARVN personnel “assimilated” into the PAVN-- became powerful tools for Hanoi to propagate its vision of the Vietnamese nation across conquered territory.

Forgetting the past also extended to the military forces of unified Vietnam. Although Hanoi had denied earlier in the war that it supported the NLF—such support would have violated the 1954 Geneva Agreements and therefore hurt the North’s negotiating ability with the United States—it claimed after 1975 that military opposition on both sides of the border had always been part of a united front pushing for Vietnamese independence. Party histories and personal records released following the conflict show that these claims were true concerning the deep involvement of the PAVN with the NLF. Hanoi’s assertion whitewashed the distinction in objectives between the two forces, however. Since the NLF’s idea of independence had not included a Communist takeover, in 1976 the DRV and the PAVN removed NLF members from posts of civilian and military leadership in the South. Although personnel in NLF units that were still operational were assimilated into the PAVN, many of the organization’s leaders had to go into exile with other non-communists. Ironically, therefore, some who had once fought with North Vietnam’s military against a common foe had a lesser role in the united country’s future than those who had fought against it but later defected.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Wiest, *Vietnam’s Forgotten Army*, 284-5.

<sup>112</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 44, 48, 63.

### **The Legacy of the PAVN takeover**

To outside observers in the decade following the end of the Second Indochina War, the PAVN takeover of South Vietnam was only the first indication that the new country was a fundamentally martial state. The invasion of Cambodia and the PAVN's military high state of readiness against China's military threat propagated the impression. It was not unfounded, since as late as 1986 the armed forces of Vietnam dwarfed "all of its ASEAN neighbors' armies combined."<sup>113</sup>

The nature of the PAVN and more recent changes in Vietnamese foreign policy, however, suggest that its utility as an instrument of regional power has not only been exaggerated, but is decreasing.<sup>114</sup> First, the PAVN's experience primarily in guerilla tactics and the absence of an expeditionary capability made it less of a threat than it appeared. Second, Vietnam's departure in the late 1980s from self-reliance toward a strategy of greater interdependence with other countries suggests it is embracing a broader definition of national security than military strength.<sup>115</sup> Third, because of the increasing frequency of territorial disputes with China off its coast, Vietnam's focus has shifted from its army to its navy.<sup>116</sup> Finally, the revolutionary character of the PAVN has abated since its takeover of South Vietnam, causing it to view regional conflict in less ideological terms. Although the North had once despised the South for its Western influence, exposure to the South demonstrated to the once isolated PAVN that the Communist Party's way of solving national security problems was not the only way.<sup>117</sup> In this way, conquering the ARVN led indirectly to a cultural change in the PAVN.

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<sup>113</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam*, 319.

<sup>114</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam*, 320.

<sup>115</sup> Hong Hiep Le, "Vietnam's Strategic Trajectory From Internal Development to External Engagement," *Strategic Insights*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2012, <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2126938>, 2; Alexander L. Vuving, "Strategy and Evolution of Vietnam's China Policy: A Changing Mixture of Pathways," *Asian Survey* 46, no. 6 (December 2006), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/as.2006.46.6.805>, 810.

<sup>116</sup> Le, "Vietnam's Strategic Trajectory From Internal Development to External Engagement," 10.

<sup>117</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam*, 322.

## **Chapter 5**

### **The Unification of Austria in 1955 & the Incorporation of Hong Kong into China in 1997**

Austria's emergence as an independent, neutral state in 1955 and China's reclamation of Hong Kong in 1997 provide two additional cases of unification. For different reasons, neither fit the category in the same way as the cases of Germany and Vietnam.

Austria had no official military during the ten years of its division—only the remnants of pre-World War II and World War II military units. Furthermore, unlike Germany or Vietnam, Austria was divided into four regions at the time of its unification; one of the divisions of the state was simply more significant than the rest because of the political differences between the Soviet Union and the other three occupying powers in the country.

Hong Kong is unusual because it is a city-state of a few million people on the edge of a country with over a billion inhabitants. Furthermore, although Hong Kong had a military, a foreign power governed the territory. Partly as a result, none of the military was integrated into the “winning” military force. In this sense, the Hong Kong case was more of an incorporation of new territory than a unification. Therefore, this chapter uses the former term instead.

Nevertheless, a study of Austria and Hong Kong is useful because it rounds out the spectrum of cases: Their unifications were more deliberate than Germany's at the outset, and they were more peaceful than Vietnam's. In addition, they provide additional breadth because they took place on opposite sides of the world.

#### **Austria**

Austria emerged as an independent country on May 15, 1955, when the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, and France signed a treaty dictating the departure of their occupying forces and mandating that Austria adhere to a strict policy of neutrality.<sup>1</sup> Austria's independence following the end of World War Two had been the aim of the

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<sup>1</sup> Robert L. Ferring, “The Austrian State Treaty of 1955 and the Cold War,” *The Western Political Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (December 1968), 664.

Moscow Treaty, which the wartime Allies signed on November 1, 1943.<sup>2</sup> Even though the war ended in 1945, however, disagreements between the United States and the Soviet Union over the identity of a free Austria and the issue's linkage to the future of Germany delayed Austria's independence for over ten years. During this time, the superpowers participated in more than 100 meetings regarding the issue. Although they finally agreed in February 1954 that Austria would be a neutral state, Soviet refusal to withdraw its occupying forces—an unacceptable position to the other three powers—left the question unresolved. Then, “in February 1955, the USSR unexpectedly started a new initiative which, in just three months, was to lead to the State Treaty of May 1955.”<sup>3</sup>

These unfolding events reveal three notable characteristics of the process for Austrian unification and independence. First, the process was slow and faltering at multiple levels. Regarding the occupying forces' efforts to set the peaceful conditions for an independent Austria, one author writes that “the United States found itself reacting to events as they unfolded, rather than establishing the agenda for the postwar period.”<sup>4</sup> The US military representative in Moscow was quick to accuse the Soviets of similar shortcomings. As the paragraph above reveals, superpower disagreements over the future of Austria also delayed the process at diplomatic levels.<sup>5</sup>

The second characteristic is the process's relative rapidity beginning in February 1955. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of that month, Soviet Foreign Minister V. M. Molotov broke from previous policy by announcing that “the withdrawal of the armed forces of the four powers from Austria could be achieved without awaiting conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany.”<sup>6</sup> In March, Austrian chancellor Julius Raab shortly met with Molotov to discuss the conditions for independence, namely Austria's promise not “to join any alliances, allow any foreign bases on Austrian soil or seek any *Anschluss*” (an absorption into Germany comparable to 1938). Four power negotiations began at

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<sup>2</sup> James Jay Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War: The Struggle for Occupied Austria*, Texas A & M University Military History Series 81 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 24.

<sup>3</sup> Gudrun Schwarzer, “The Peaceful Settlement of Interstate Conflict: Saar, Austria, and Berlin,” *Journal of Peace Research*, 35, no. 6 (November 1998), 747.

<sup>4</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 48.

<sup>5</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 46.

<sup>6</sup> Ferring, “The Austrian State Treaty of 1955 and the Cold War,” 662.



the beginning of May, followed by the signing of the treaty on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. The last occupation forces departed the country by October.<sup>7</sup>

The third characteristic was that the process took place without any violence. There were a few incidents that made violence seem likely: the Soviets attempted to use an economic strike to strengthen Communist representation in the Austrian government, they expressed opposition to the secret formation of an armed national defense force prior to the State Treaty, and they restricted ground and air routes into Vienna after a 1948 coup in neighboring Czechoslovakia. The latter provocation led Western leaders to consider an airlift into Vienna like the one they supplied Berlin. However, the Soviets never blockaded the city. Furthermore, its forces on the ground practiced increasing restraint as diplomacy took center stage for stabilizing the country.<sup>8</sup>

### **The Fate of “Losing Militaries” in Austria**

Because Austria suffered defeat in World War II as a political and military accomplice of Germany and endured occupation for ten years afterward, no national military force held the losing straw when the country became whole in 1955. Nevertheless, the plans of the post-war Austrian government for an apolitical military force and the stipulations of the State Treaty excluded or minimized the influence of several military organizations that had existed in the previous three decades of Austria’s history. One of these was the right-wing *Heimwehr* that had emerged during the Interwar period and was most amenable to assimilation into the Nazi *Wehrmacht* after the *Anschluss*. To minimize right-wing influence in the new Austrian armed forces, the State Treaty proscribed those who had been members of several national socialist organizations or who had served under Nazi military authority in the rank of Colonel or above from joining Austria’s military.<sup>9</sup> The

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<sup>7</sup> Ferring, “The Austrian State Treaty of 1955 and the Cold War,” 662-4.

<sup>8</sup> William B. Bader, *Austria between East and West, 1945-1955* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1966), 107, 166; Roger G Miller, *To Save a City: The Berlin Airlift, 1948-1949* (College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press, 2008), 77.

<sup>9</sup> “The Austrian State Treaty: An Account of the Postwar Negotiations Together with the Text of the Treaty and Related Documents” (Department of State, April 1957), Department of State Publication 6437, European and British Commonwealth Series 49, 41.

Austrian government was more restrictive, prohibiting former members of the *Wehrmacht* from becoming officers.<sup>10</sup>

Two other former militant branches that would play no role in a new Austrian military were the leftist *Volkswehr* and the Soviet-created *Werkschutz*. The *Volkswehr* had been a military organization during the days of the Austria Republic, but it had become “more of a [political] party guard than a true national army.”<sup>11</sup> Primarily active in the Soviet occupation zone, the primary obligation of the *Werkschutz* was to defend German-built oil fields in Austria that the Soviets had claimed as spoils of victory. The Austrian government viewed *Werkschutz* units suspiciously as tension between the superpowers grew because the Soviets had armed the units heavily.<sup>12</sup> While it does not appear that an independent Austria barred former members of either organization from future military service, the state excluded the cultural underpinnings of both in the creation of its armed forces.

### **The Post-Unification Austrian Military**

The self-defense force of an independent, neutral Austria took shape even before independence under the oversight of the nascent Austrian democratic government and the three Western occupying powers. Britain used the *gendarmerie*—Austria’s rural domestic security force—for stabilizing its zone of occupation, and the United States began secretly training an armed national defense force within one of the *gendarmerie* units. The government sought those with pre-World War II military experience (though not in the *Wehrmacht*) for some of the initial cadre. Although the Soviets were not ignorant of such efforts and accused the West of unlawfully arming the populace, the US defended training the units as part of its prerogative to provide security in its region, and the Austrian government strongly supported the effort as part of its plan for a self-sufficient force once the occupation ended. Once the State Treaty was signed, the Austrian government began

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<sup>10</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 176, 182.

<sup>11</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 182, 176.

<sup>12</sup> Bader, *Austria between East and West, 1945-1955*, 101-2.

a conscription program, and the specially-trained *gendarmarie* became the recruits' instructors.<sup>13</sup>

Guidance for the composition of these forces and the weapons and equipment they could train with and employ came from The State Treaty in the form of prohibitions rather than permissions. Besides excluding personnel with ties to Nazism from its ranks that the previous section discussed, the treaty strictly limited the type of weapons the new service could possess or construct, prohibited the use of all Allied war material acquired during the war, and ordered Austria to render unusable all German or non-Allied military material.<sup>14</sup>

Ultimately, the Austrian government provided the guidance for the employment of its armed forces. This guidance came out in the form of a declaration about "the rights and duties of neutral states" published in 1960.<sup>15</sup> Although the government acknowledged in the declaration its commitment to neutrality, the statement also stressed that the state was "entitled to decide alone when and how its neutrality was threatened or violated by another country," and therefore how it would use its armed forces.<sup>16</sup> Austria took the absence of dissent from the Soviet Union following the declaration's publication as tacit approval of its plan to pursue a neutrality that was independent of foreign dictate.<sup>17</sup>

This neutrality also guarantees that the United Nations cannot require Austria to contribute its military toward UN mission requirements, let alone operations under NATO.<sup>18</sup> There is no doubt, however, that the Austrian armed forces benefitted from the West's security structure even as it remained free to pursue goals for domestic defense. Furthermore, as the section below will discuss, the allies on the Western side of the Iron Curtain did their best to ensure Austria's military was not only friendly to NATO, but able to operate together with it if absolutely necessary.

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<sup>13</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 178, 181-2, 186.

<sup>14</sup> "The Austrian State Treaty," 42.

<sup>15</sup> Sven Allard, *Russia and the Austrian State Treaty* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1970), 228.

<sup>16</sup> Allard, *Russia and the Austrian State Treaty*, 228-9.

<sup>17</sup> Allard, *Russia and the Austrian State Treaty*, 229.

<sup>18</sup> Karl Zemanek, "Neutral Austria in the United Nations," *International Organization* 15, no. 3 (Summer 1961), 413.

## **Geopolitical Influence on the Emergence of the Austrian Military**

Austria's defeat along with the Axis powers of the Second World War made its future as a state highly subject to the decisions of the victors, and those victors' growing disagreement with each other threatened to make Austria the battlefield of yet another European conflict. Nevertheless, events in the larger world and the relative unimportance of Austria in the Cold War led one of those victors, the Soviet Union, to concede on the issue of Austrian independence. Its concession on the conditions that Austria remain a neutral country amid the growing East and West blocs in Europe allowed Austria to build an independent military force. In particular, independence from NATO allowed Austria to pursue its own security policy. As a result, Austria attracted little notice from the Soviet Union and assured the United States that the Soviets would not add Austria to its list of Eastern European satellites.

During the occupation period, one of the challenges the United States faced in wresting Austria from Soviet control and making it stand on its own was fostering the creation of an armed force without provoking a harsh reaction. Early in the occupation, the Austrians had proposed to the Allies an active duty force of 22,000 and a militia of 25,000 "primarily for protecting the frontier and dealing with domestic disturbances."<sup>19</sup> The Soviets adamantly opposed this proposal, and they investigated the Austrian government to ensure it was not carrying forth these plans. Like the Soviet Union, the United States was also initially hesitant to arm so many Austrians, largely for fear of a fascist resurgence.<sup>20</sup> As suspicion widened between the United States and the Soviet Union, however, the former grew more in favor of the Austrians' proposal and the Soviets remained against it.

A few events in the late 1940s and early 1950s served to strengthen this divergent trend, one being the aforementioned Berlin Blockade. The blockade showed how far the Soviet Union was willing to go to oppose Western attempts at the economic and political integration of Western Europe. The United States feared for Austria after the blockade because like Germany's division, the geographic partition of Austria put its capital city well inside the Soviet zone. More importantly, there was a lack of suitable air corridors

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<sup>19</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 176.

<sup>20</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 176.

into Vienna. If Moscow ordered its occupying forces to close off the city like it did for Berlin, Vienna would have been more difficult to supply.<sup>21</sup> In view of these challenges, an armed Austrian force was appealing to the United States. It might not be able to overcome a Soviet blockade, but it would at least have value as a deterrent.

The dilemma for the United States in giving an armed force deterrent value, however, was that it must communicate the force's existence to the Soviets. So far, under pressure from the US state department and its European allies, the United States had been training the forces secretly. Furthermore, even though America was funneling money to European countries through the Marshall Plan, United States Forces Austria (USFA) could acquire little to assist the *gendarmarie* in building up its forces.<sup>22</sup>

The outbreak of the Korean War changed things, however. Although the conflict was halfway across the world and did not directly involve Soviet forces, Soviet complicity was understood. Furthermore, the invasion imprinted on American minds that the spread of Communism anywhere was a threat to Western ideals.<sup>23</sup> The immediate effect on these events in Austria was for the US Congress to authorize money out of the Mutual Defense Assistance Fund (MDAP) for the country. This money, which Congress had previously planned to withhold until the Austrian State Treaty was signed, went towards material supply of US forces in Austria. Those forces could then use it to buy weapons with which to arm Austrian troops.<sup>24</sup>

This new development made the arming of Austria more difficult to conceal from the Soviets, but identification of Communism as *the* premier threat made the United States less concerned about keeping the program from them. When the Soviets made repeated charges against reports of new schools for training a "future army" and periodically confiscated *gendarmarie* equipment in protest, the United States disregarded their complaints. After all, the United States was doing exactly what the Soviets accused them of: cultivating an army within *gendarmarie* units. That the maturing Austrian forces were US-trained caused some consternation in the US state department when "many members of the *gendarmarie* proved to be registered members of a new right-

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<sup>21</sup> Miller, *To Save a City*, 78.

<sup>22</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*. 180-3.

<sup>23</sup> Alice Lyman Miller, *Becoming Asia: Change and Continuity in Asian International Relations since World War II* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2011), 72, 7-80.

<sup>24</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 184.

wing political party in Austria.”<sup>25</sup> The US Joint Chiefs of Staff defended the USFA’s program, however, arguing that a strong defense force was necessary prior to the State Treaty, regardless of the political leanings of a few of the force’s members. Naturally, the state department was also concerned that the program decreased the chances of the Soviets signing the State Treaty. By 1955, however, the Soviets had an abrupt change of face.<sup>26</sup>

Although sources differ on Soviet motives, Moscow’s decision to press ahead with the Austrian State Treaty beginning in February 1955 appears to stem largely from a cost-benefit calculation that had changed considerably over the previous year. The Soviets had always preferred neutrality to incorporation of Austria into NATO, and a neutral status would limit the threat from an Austrian military force. The Soviets had been afraid, however, of the precedent a neutral Austria would set for states in the Eastern bloc that were protesting Soviet influence.<sup>27</sup> Their refusal to make moves that might end the Austrian conflict seemed to reflect a fear that they might “be beaten at the game of Chicken,” to use the words of Robert Jervis in the context of the Cold War.<sup>28</sup>

Since 1954, however, several deleterious security developments turned neutrality from an option into a perceived imperative for the Soviets to pursue in Austria. These included the rearmament of Germany following the Paris Treaties; US protectorate treaties and anti-Communist alliances with states in Southeast Asia, the Pacific, and the Middle East; and the sustainment of a high US military budget and continued nuclear buildup in spite of an armistice in Korea. In need of a propaganda victory amid these developments, Khrushchev turned the neutrality issue in Austria from a concession to a “concrete example of Soviet willingness to cooperate” and “a symbol of Soviet peace policy.”<sup>29</sup> In reality, Austria was not critical enough for Soviet security to delay the neutrality issue any longer. Moscow even conceded on the deletion of a statement in the treaty assigning war guilt to the Austrians. Considering that the Soviets had “given in on

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<sup>25</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 187-8.

<sup>26</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 91, 179, 182, 186-8.

<sup>27</sup> Schwarzer, “The Peaceful Settlement of Interstate Conflict: Saar, Austria, and Berlin,” 751.

<sup>28</sup> Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976), 59.

<sup>29</sup> Schwarzer, “The Peaceful Settlement of Interstate Conflict: Saar, Austria, and Berlin,” 752.



nearly every disputed point,” Austria and the other occupying powers quickly signed the treaty.<sup>30</sup>

Along with the treaty, the Soviets demonstrated their full commitment to Austria’s right to defend itself. One official told Austrian State Secretary Ferdinand Graf that his country was free to exceed the 53,000-man force that the Soviets had rejected eight years before.<sup>31</sup> To back up its words, the Soviet Union donated to Austria “a cache of military stocks that included ten thousand carbines, ten thousand machine pistols, twenty-four howitzers, and twenty-eight T-34 tanks.”<sup>32</sup> According to author James Carafano, one of these tanks sits next to an American tank in front of the Military History Museum in Vienna today—“an enduring reminder of the occupation’s final ironic act.”<sup>33</sup>

For the United States, however, the imperatives of the Cold War dictated continued assistance even after the treaty. The Austrian forces benefitted from \$10 million in military aid each year, several secret advisors who resided in the military attaché’s office, and thousands of pages of NATO communications doctrine the United States copied before its forces departed. Although the Austrians accepted all these provisions, they would not make any official pledges to NATO or the United States.<sup>34</sup> Instead, they had in mind a military that was free of external strings.

### **Domestic Influence on the Emergence of the Austrian Military**

The artificiality of the boundary between the Soviet and Western allies’ occupation zones in Austria made it relatively inconsequential in the formation of Austria’s military after the State Treaty. The boundary had not existed prior to 1945, and because the Soviet Union and the United States agreed on a single government in Vienna, political differences did not have time to develop between East and West before the treaty’s signing, resulting in Nazi and Communist sympathizers being spread across the country.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ferring, “The Austrian State Treaty of 1955 and the Cold War,” 664.

<sup>31</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 178, 190.

<sup>32</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 190.

<sup>33</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 191.

<sup>34</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 191-2.

<sup>35</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 178; Bader, *Austria between East and West, 1945-1955*, 107.



In spite of the nationwide existence of such groups—or perhaps because their scattered distribution limited their political influence—the representative Austrian government proved remarkably unified in its policies. At least one leader voiced his hope that unanimity would result in the creation of an apolitical military force. Austria's first post-war undersecretary for army affairs, Franz Winterer, expressed confidence that Austria could dispense with the factionalism that had characterized its military prior to the war. Instead, he planned to apply the “corporatist approach” of the current chancellor and “draw equally on all political factions” in recruiting for Austria's armed forces.<sup>36</sup>

Neutrality could only help in the creation of such a military, since it would encourage people to volunteer for reasons of national defense rather than allegiance to any greater alliance or ideology. Nevertheless, neutrality was a condition largely imposed by the Soviet Union. Austrian chancellor Bruno Kreisky understood that military neutrality would “appease Soviet concerns and obtain the long sought State Treaty.”<sup>37</sup> The Austrians quickly agreed to Molotov's offer to negotiate in February 1955, and they prepared to field their army upon the State Treaty's signing in May.<sup>38</sup>

### **Hong Kong**

At midnight on June 30, 1997, Hong Kong reverted to Chinese control after 156 years as a British territory. Politically and militarily, the transition was a radical change for the city-state. Once answerable to a person, the Queen of England, Hong Kong became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) that owed allegiance to China's Communist Party (CCP). Once under the protection of a mix of British, Nepali Gurkha, and Hong Kong Chinese tri-service forces whose logistical support was 6000 miles away, it now welcomed a detachment of the 41<sup>st</sup> People's Liberation Army (PLA), whose headquarters were located nearby on the Sino-Vietnamese border. As part of a public ceremony in the city to mark the transition to Chinese

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<sup>36</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 176.

<sup>37</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 130.

<sup>38</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 191.

rule, the First Battalion of Britain's Black Watch Highlands Regiment formally passed military colors to an elite PLA unit that had arrived for the occasion.<sup>39</sup>

Britain had acquired Hong Kong Island as a concession from China during the Opium Wars of 1840-42, and the territory increased to include nearby Stonecutter's Island and the south Kowloon Peninsula by 1860.<sup>40</sup> Hong Kong grew to be a dynamic free-trading entrepot and manufacturing center whose GDP growth exceeded 5% for over three straight decades prior to the British handover.<sup>41</sup> Its prosperity stood in sharp contrast to China's faltering economic progress under Mao's Great Leap Forward in the 1950s and Cultural Revolution in the 1960s. For the Republic of China (PRC), recovering Hong Kong was "an outward and visible symbol of the restoration of Chinese sovereignty over territories extorted...by militarily stronger Western powers."<sup>42</sup>

Three notable characteristics marked the handover of Hong Kong, the first two being that the process was slow and methodical. The event was the outcome of years of negotiating and careful planning between China and Britain. For Britain, the most pressing challenge of the process was that "the weight of history" was bearing upon it.<sup>43</sup> The nation had arranged a 99-year lease on Hong Kong in 1898, and it was not in Britain's national interest to extend it.<sup>44</sup> The two sides began negotiations on Hong Kong's future in 1982, forming a joint declaration in 1984 that set the stage for discussions under a Chinese-British liaison group about defense and security. These discussions culminated in the 1994 Defense Lands Agreement, which laid out British responsibilities for preparing the territory that the PLA would occupy on July 1, 1997.<sup>45</sup> Because the PLA would require less land, manpower, and materials on

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<sup>39</sup> Neil Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn: The Hong Kong Handover to China*, 1st English ed (London ; Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, 1998), 2-3, 89-90, 192; Bryan Dutton, "Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint," *RUSI Journal* 142, no. 5 (October 1997), 20.

<sup>40</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 2, 13, 35-6.

<sup>41</sup> Henry S. Rowen, ed., *Behind East Asian Growth: The Political and Social Foundations of Prosperity* (London ; New York: Routledge, 1998).

<sup>42</sup> Warren I. Cohen and Li Zhao, eds., *Hong Kong under Chinese Rule: The Economic and Political Implications of Reversion* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 5.

<sup>43</sup> Dutton, "Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint," 17.

<sup>44</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 35-6.

<sup>45</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 12; Dutton, "Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint," 22.

station than the British garrison, the latter forces conducted a significant drawdown during the 1990s. The last operational forces departed in the weeks leading to the event, and the Black Watch battalion departed the city within a few hours of the ceremony.<sup>46</sup>

The third characteristic follows from the first two: Peace and understanding generally marked the negotiations leading up to the handover. Major General Bryan Dutton, the last British garrison commander, wrote that “initially the relationship between the British and the Chinese was difficult” due to cultural differences, the PRC’s “preoccupation with security and secrecy,” and strict control from the CCP. A positive relationship developed as the handover approached, however, and the British managed “to convince the Chinese to make some changes to their policies and plans.”<sup>47</sup>

### **The Fate of the British Garrison**

Because a dissimilar foreign power had governed Hong Kong prior to the changeover, China did not anticipate assimilating members of the city’s former defense forces into its ranks—not even the Hong Kong Chinese that had served under the British. Beginning with the first drawdowns in 1994, when garrison forces numbered nearly 10,000, Hong Kong’s military members had to start looking for other employment.<sup>48</sup>

The British generally assisted with the effort, taking different measures depending on the member’s nationality. For the native British forces serving in Hong Kong, the answer was simple relocation, either to Britain or another military assignment with their families. The future for Hong Kong Chinese that had served under the British was a little more uncertain because of concerns that Chinese authorities in the new Hong Kong would discriminate against them. To allow these members “distance between themselves and their former colonial employers,” Britain

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<sup>46</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 89-91; Dutton, “Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint,” 20.

<sup>47</sup> Dutton, “Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint,” 17, 24.

<sup>48</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 89-90.

planned to “backfill” their posts with non-Chinese personnel.<sup>49</sup> Fortunately, this plan proved unnecessary, and many Chinese served until midnight on June 30, 1997. Most did not have the special UK passports that many Hong Kong British did, so they became private Chinese citizens.<sup>50</sup>

Among its military forces, the Gurkhas presented the most difficult challenge for Britain. Although Britain paid Gurkha soldiers well, it only authorized them a meager pension in retirement. Nevertheless, most did not wish to return to Nepal. The country’s low standard of living and the presence of a Nepali community in Hong Kong that had grown up during the regiment’s nearly 50 years of service in the city motivated many to remain there. In view of these preferences and the need for other workers in security and industry in Hong Kong, Britain cooperated with the city in the early 1990s to set up a contracting organization for them called the Jardine Securicor Gurkha Services (JSGS). In the short term, ex-Gurkha contractors working for JSGS supervised and guarded Hong Kong sites that the Chinese reclaimed or reconstructed following the handover. Long afterwards, they provided similar services for commercial offices and private property, and they maintained security at official meeting venues. Ex-Gurkhas working for JSGS received higher pay than in the British army, comprehensive insurance coverage, and periodic free flights to visit Nepal.<sup>51</sup>

### **The Character of the PLA**

For three reasons, the incorporation of Hong Kong into China did not significantly alter the PLA on the national level. First, as mentioned above, the PLA did not assimilate any of Hong Kong’s defense forces into its ranks. Even within Hong Kong, there was no need to augment PLA manning. China brought to the city-state “an infantry brigade, an air force helicopter group, and a fleet of patrol boats and transport vessels” manned by personnel attached to PLA garrisons from the nearby city of Shenzhen (to avoid confusion, the Chinese air force and navy are

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<sup>49</sup> Dutton, “Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint,” 20.

<sup>50</sup> Dutton, “Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint,” 20.

<sup>51</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 192-5.

organizationally still part of the PLA).<sup>52</sup> Second, there was little strategic military value or need to defend Hong Kong that would merit a reorientation of PLA priorities or constitution after China reacquired the territory. Hong Kong was not close to a critical military area such as the Taiwan Straits, so occupying it would “not increase the PLA’s ability to concentrate force” in such areas.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, no significant external threat existed to Hong Kong. In fact, Hong Kong’s social, political, and economic stability gave Beijing “powerful incentives to minimize Hong Kong’s connection with the PLA.”<sup>54</sup> This assertion leads to the third reason for the limited impact of Hong Kong on the PLA: the minute number of PLA forces assigned to the city. Considering that only 5000 PLA members out of a national force of some three million active duty forces took responsibility for the city’s defense in 1997, the event had a negligible effect on national military structure.<sup>55</sup> Major General Dutton also wrote that because keeping a garrison in an expensive city like Hong Kong is “a heavy burden on the Chinese Defence budget,” Beijing was considering further reducing manpower strength there.<sup>56</sup>

On the other hand, Hong Kong’s unique character did require PLA leaders to make some changes to the way they conducted their mission in the city and selected forces for the city’s defense. As suggested above, even though China relished the opportunity to showcase the PLA at the city’s handover ceremony, its desire for Hong Kong’s continued commercial success required that the PLA also exercise considerable mission restraint compared to other places. The PRC had promised before the changeover that the city would have “a high degree of autonomy” and be allowed to maintain its “free-market, capitalist economy, its rule of law, its independent civil service, and its free press.”<sup>57</sup> If the PLA was to abide these institutions, it had to take a more relaxed approach to internal security than it was accustomed to. As the next two sections will discuss, the stigma of the Tiananmen

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<sup>52</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 111-2.

<sup>53</sup> Cohen and Zhao, *Hong Kong under Chinese Rule*, 5.

<sup>54</sup> Cohen and Zhao, *Hong Kong under Chinese Rule*, 5.

<sup>55</sup> Dutton, “Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint,” 26; Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 106.

<sup>56</sup> Dutton, “Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint,” 26.

<sup>57</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 13.

Square Massacre made it even more important for the PLA to exercise restraint in an international trading city like Hong Kong. A national trend of transferring more internal security to the People's Armed Police (PAP) helped remove this stigma in many places like Hong Kong, but even the PAP's officers usually came out of the PLA. As a result, traditional Communist Chinese norms of security, which place less value on human rights and more value on public order than in democracies, may persist in the police force.<sup>58</sup>

Having to adopt new norms of security in Hong Kong did not change leaders' views about the need for military discipline in the PLA, however. Concerns that the city's prosperity would have a corrupting influence on the PLA drove the CCP to take special precautionary measures in the assignment and regulation of PLA forces there. First, PLA Political Commissars chose conscripts who spoke very little Cantonese—Hong Kong's native language—to serve at the city's garrison. The reasoning was that “if you cannot chat to the locals you cannot really fraternize, and this limits the possibilities of absorption into the Hong Kong lifestyle.”<sup>59</sup> Towards the same end, the PLA also rotated personnel between Hong Kong and their garrisons in Shenzhen and elsewhere every three to four months. The practice also limited the time conscripts could spend the scant money they received from the government in an expensive city like Hong Kong.<sup>60</sup> Finally, although financial reforms under Deng Xiaoping had incentivized the PLA to become a more entrepreneurial organization across the country, it was forbidden to conduct any commercial endeavors out of Hong Kong.<sup>61</sup> The Chinese government took all these measures for the dual purpose of maintaining the garrison's professionalism amid Hong Kong's distractions and ensuring the city remained an inviting place for foreign investment.

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<sup>58</sup> Dutton, “Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint,” 25-6.

<sup>59</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 109.

<sup>60</sup> Dutton, “Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint,” 26.

<sup>61</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 106; Dutton, “Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint,” 26.

## **External Influence on the Fate of the British Garrison and the Character of the PLA**

The Chinese reacquisition of Hong Kong represents the other side of the geopolitical spectrum from the unification of Austria in that the process lacked significant direct external influence. Although Britain is a foreign power, its governance of Hong Kong and provision for its defense for 156 years make it the minor or “losing” domestic power for the purpose of this study. “Loss” has meaning relative to territorial property in this case, so Britain’s loss was complete. Its garrison forces gave up all power to affect security in Hong Kong. Furthermore, the PLA did not even absorb the garrison’s Hong Kong Chinese into its ranks, at least not in 1997. No external power directed the Chinese to make this decision.

Furthermore, there was little direct geopolitical influence in the acquisition of Hong Kong that affected the character of the PLA. The influence has been largely indirect. Although China’s domestic and foreign policy objectives have not changed with the addition of Hong Kong, the PLA has been growing in strength as China has grown in power generally.<sup>62</sup> This is a trend that China experts Alice Miller and Richard Wich attribute largely to “the emergence of an international context that made China’s rise possible.”<sup>63</sup> This context includes the PRC’s accession to the UN, diplomatic recognition by the majority of the world, and the dropping of long-standing US economic embargoes in the 1970s.<sup>64</sup> Although the termination of the British lease awarded Hong Kong back to China, the event was an opportunity for China to instill pride in its citizens and be heard by other nations regarding “grievances from the treaty port era and other lingering territorial issues.”<sup>65</sup> These issues include disputes over islets and shoals in the East and South China Seas that China believes its neighbors stole from it when it was a weaker country. If its

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<sup>62</sup> Cohen and Zhao, *Hong Kong under Chinese Rule*, 186.

<sup>63</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 231.

<sup>64</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 210.

<sup>65</sup> Bruce A. Elleman, *Modern China: Continuity and Change 1644 to the Present* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2010), 438.



neighbors do not recognize China's claims, China may justify the use of force—via the PLA Navy (PLAN), for example—to recover the territories.<sup>66</sup>

The acquisition of Hong Kong, therefore, achieved three things for China, all of which were connected to the PLA in some way. First, it was an opportunity to remind the world community—of which the PRC had become a part—what was rightfully China's. The PRC held the hope that even if that community did not endorse military action off Chinese shores, it might at least understand if China used it. Second, the reclamation of Hong Kong was one of several rallying points in time for the country to express its nationalism. The PLA's newsworthy arrival in the city supports this claim.<sup>67</sup> Finally, the accession was an event—along with the return of Macao by Portugal in 1999—which China perceives as part of a progression toward reclamation of other territories, including possibly Taiwan.<sup>68</sup> This hope aligns with the vision of Deng Xiaoping when he devised the “one country, two systems” in 1982, referring to the preservation of Taiwan and Hong Kong's economic systems under a socialist China.<sup>69</sup> Although the PLA continues to expand its logistic capabilities to accommodate strategic options regarding Taiwan, Deng's vision also imposes restraints on China's military. Nowhere is this clearer than in the immediate relationship between China and Hong Kong.

### **Political Factors between China and Hong Kong**

A political rivalry existed between the PRC and British Hong Kong that stemmed largely from the distinction between capitalist democracy and Revolutionary Communist ideology. This is the simplest reason that Beijing had not planned on integrating any Hong Kong Chinese members of the British garrison into its ranks, although the question remains whether any of those troops would have accepted the offer. The weightier discussion for China's relationship with Hong

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<sup>66</sup> Army War College (U.S.), *Learning by Doing: The PLA Trains at Home and Abroad*, ed. Roy Kamphausen, David Lai, and Travis Tanner, Strategic Studies Institute Book (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2012), 364.

<sup>67</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 160.

<sup>68</sup> Cohen and Zhao, *Hong Kong under Chinese Rule*, 191.

<sup>69</sup> Elleman, *Modern China*, 421.

Kong, however, concerns how the political history of the two sides influenced the PLA's behavior in the newly acquired city.

The PLA was historically a threat to Hong Kong because Mao Zedong justified the use of force on ideological grounds. His philosophy transferred to the maintenance of internal order, and other Chinese leaders did not hesitate to use the PLA in applying Mao's principles.<sup>70</sup> This was the case for the Tiananmen Square Massacre in 1989, which killed between 1000 and 2000 civilian protestors who were demanding greater democratic freedom.<sup>71</sup> This event is possibly the defining event for Hong Kong's perception of the PLA when 4000 of its troops arrived there in 1997.<sup>72</sup> The Hong Kong governor's request for 3.5 million residents with British passports to be granted "right of abode" in the UK prior to the Chinese accession is one indicator of the municipal mood at the time.<sup>73</sup>

Although some British leaders believed residents' fears were overblown, the PLA needed to honor those fears and prove it was amenable to maintaining the city's economic and political freedoms.<sup>74</sup> Only then would Hong Kong remain a hub of commercial wealth from which China benefited. Recognizing this, China made Hong Kong a Special Administrative Region, according to which the police would have responsibility for internal security in the city and Beijing would only activate the PLA to put down internal turmoil.<sup>75</sup>

The concern for Hong Kong in accepting the conditions for the SAR was what type of incident the PRC would classify as "turmoil." After all, public demonstrations were prohibited in China, and "the massive peaceful demonstrations in Hong Kong in response to events in Tiananmen Square...left deep scars on the Chinese political psyche. [The Chinese] have an ingrained fear of their inability to control 'events' in Hong Kong with the wider implications for the remainder of China."<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Army War College (U.S.), *Learning by Doing*, 364.

<sup>71</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 87-8.

<sup>72</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 98.

<sup>73</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 12.

<sup>74</sup> Dutton, "Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint," 21, 25.

<sup>75</sup> Dutton, "Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint," 22, 25.

<sup>76</sup> Dutton, "Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint," 25.

The Chinese government has a strong economic and political rationale to “maintain a good working relationship with the Hong Kong government,” however, and retain “the respect and affection” that the Hong Kong people had for the British garrison.<sup>77</sup> It has too many problems with uneven development elsewhere in the country to concern itself with the effect of Hong Kong’s democracy on those living under socialism.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, Hong Kong should expect that the Chinese will not allow the PLA to intervene in what is already a smoothly-running system.

Hong Kong should take further comfort from one other characteristic of the PLA. Although many of China’s leaders served in the PLA, the organization has never sought political gain for itself. “[The PLA] has never moved into politics on its own initiative but only when someone – Mao or Deng – ordered it to do so,” writes Neil Craig.<sup>79</sup> The PLA’s subordination to the CCP should provide further assurance to Hong Kong. The responsibility falls back on Beijing, therefore, to ensure Hong Kong remains a safe place for foreign investment and tourism like it was under British control.

### **The Legacies of the Austrian Military and the PLA**

The benefit of receiving US money, weapons, and military training followed by Soviet equipment and the achievement of neutral status seemed the best of both worlds for Austria: it had a fighting force without the obligation to contribute to an alliance. In the context of the Cold War, a state more pivotal to superpower prestige may not have had this luxury. Furthermore, as Soviet takeovers in Czechoslovakia and Hungary showed, a country farther east from the seams of the Iron Curtain may not have had the luxury of indirect protection from the same alliance.

Nevertheless, at least up to the end of the Cold War, Austria maintained a military with a range of capabilities. For potential regional crises in which regional powers might disregard its neutral status, a small number of readiness troops with coordinated air support trained for operations aimed to protect Austrian sovereignty. For the possibility of a direct attack on the state, its military remained prepared to field reserves of up to 160,000 personnel. Austria recognized that such a force with only conventional

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<sup>77</sup> Dutton, “Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint,” 19.

<sup>78</sup> Cohen and Zhao, *Hong Kong under Chinese Rule*, 186.

<sup>79</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 104.

capabilities could not take on either superpower, but it was also relatively confident that those powers would not have recognized its neutrality if they had intended on invading. Therefore, the government assumed that “aggression would be started with limited forces.”<sup>80</sup> This assumption has allowed the country to spend very little on defense. At 1.3% of its GDP the year before the fall of the Berlin Wall, its defense expenditure was even less than its fellow neutral countries Switzerland, Sweden, and Finland.<sup>81</sup>

Like Austria, Hong Kong is a place that has the luxury of spending very little on its defense, but for a different reason: the PLA has taken it over and brought in all of its own equipment.<sup>82</sup> Although the accession of Hong Kong did not significantly change the PLA and China’s armed forces did not integrate any Hong Kong Chinese into its ranks at the handover, the PLA planned to tailor its security approach to the city-state. It pledged to honor the laws of the constitution Hong Kong received as a Special Administrative Region of China.<sup>83</sup> Considering the PLA also planned to occupy most of the same facilities as the departing British forces and leave most internal matters to the local police, the transition in security should have appeared fairly seamless.

Nevertheless, the PLA is still a socialist military under the strict control of the CCP. Although this hierarchy makes it less likely the PLA will take a security action on its own, it also makes it more difficult for the PLA to interact with the population and communicate their intentions if public order does break down. As Major General Dutton observed before his departure in 1997, the PLA was a very secretive organization, closed to the media and unfamiliar with the public relations campaigns the British garrison had regularly undertaken.<sup>84</sup>

A recent window into PLA activities in Hong Kong suggests China’s armed forces may be opening up to the city, but its negative image is proving a difficult one

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<sup>80</sup> Kurt Steiner, ed., *Modern Austria* (Palo Alto, CA: Society for the Promotion of Science and Scholarship, 1981), 387-9.

<sup>81</sup> Binter, “European Community and World Peace: The Case of Austria,” 416.

<sup>82</sup> Dutton, “Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint,” 19-20. Dutton writes that even though the PLA took over many of the British defense facilities, the British “sold, returned to the UK, destroyed or occasionally gifted” equipment, depending on “the requirements of the Hong Kong Government, the Defence Costs Agreement and the National Audit Office.”

<sup>83</sup> Cohen and Zhao, *Hong Kong under Chinese Rule*, 74.

<sup>84</sup> Dutton, “Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint,” 22.

to shake. A 2012 East Asia Intelligence Report from the International Security & Counter Terrorism Reference Center stated that although the PLA hosts public music concerts and engages in other public relations efforts, it “has failed to win support from many crucial groups in Hong Kong, especially the youth, who view the PLA as a tool of the communist government to quash dissent and quell peaceful protest.”<sup>85</sup> If this report is true, the PLA will require more than concerts to win the population’s approval. As a former Chairman of Hong Kong’s Democratic Party explained regarding the PLA’s conduct in the city, “history will judge Hong Kong’s transfer of sovereignty not by fireworks, dignitaries or the grandeur of the handover ceremony, but by the institutions left behind to enable us to preserve Hong Kong’s rule of law and way of life.”<sup>86</sup> If the PLA can uphold such institutions over time in Hong Kong, it has a better chance of changing its image prior to an event such as the reclamation of Taiwan—a territory whose population is equally averse to Communism.



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<sup>85</sup> “15 Years Later, the PLA Is Still far from Winning Hong Kong Hearts and Minds,” East Asia Intelligence Report (International Security & Counter Terrorism Reference Center, June 27, 2012).

<sup>86</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 97.

## Chapter 6

### Synthesis of the Four Cases

The previous three chapters of this study have analyzed the influence of external and domestic political factors on the military outcomes of unification in four cases: Germany in 1990, Vietnam in 1975, Austria in 1955, and Hong Kong in 1997. The first two cases (covered in Chapters 3 and 4, respectively) are firm cases for the purpose of this study because they adhere strongly to the three basic categories—occurrence since the end of World War II, a shared or similar language and culture, and geographic proximity—introduced in Chapter 1. Furthermore, they exhibit a fairly straightforward transition from a national military force on each side of a divided state to a single armed force in a unified state.

The second two cases, covered together in Chapter 5, are soft cases. Hong Kong adheres only weakly to the requirement for a similar language and culture, and Austria does not exhibit a straightforward military transition in time. The diversity of cases, however, draws out more lessons about the relationships between independent variables—external and domestic political factors—and dependent variables—the fate of the losing or minor military force in each case and the character and composition of the unified state’s armed forces—than a set of cases whose independent variables were the same.

Because of the nature of the variables, the lessons that emerge are highly political as well. A state’s military is one of the most powerful symbols of its identity, and the application of the military for its primary purpose—preparing to fight and win wars—is an extension of government politics. Therefore, the lessons generally concern international political relations, civil-military relations, or both. Lessons do not, however, necessarily assume that states are rational actors. “The state may be conceived as a coalition of coalitions whose objectives and interests result from the powers and bargaining among the several coalitions composing the larger society and political elite.”<sup>1</sup> In a highly dynamic and complex political event such as the unification of a country, this assumption is particularly valid. The drawback to the assumption is that lessons are

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 19.

narrower both in their extraction and their predictive value than if they followed from a more rational social science theory such as that of Kenneth Waltz. Its benefit, however, is that it produces lessons that may also be more actionable.

Table 2 on the next page serves as a basis for this chapter's lessons. It lays out the primary independent and dependent variables of this study, subdivides the primary variables, and includes several related secondary variables that assist with the analysis. It also specifies a useful intermediate condition—the character of unification—which Chapters 3-5 have in common.

### **The Primary Independent Variable: External Influence**

The first primary independent variable, external influence on unification, breaks down into degree and type. Degree varies from strong to weak, and type is either direct or indirect. A strong degree of influence may occur through what Robert Gilpin calls “systemic change”—change in the governance of an international system—or else by a greater power's occupation of the country.<sup>2</sup> The former occurred with regard to Germany as the Soviet Union began to yield its leadership of the Warsaw Pact and concede more international political power to the United States. Influence in Germany's case, though strong, was also indirect because the Soviet Union did not force East Germany to yield to West Germany; it simply promoted reform and withdrew its support to the hardline elements of the government.

The other strong form of external influence—occupation—occurred in Austria from 1945 to 1955. This form of influence, unlike in the case of Germany, was direct because the Soviet Union and the Western allies from World War II ultimately decided the path of Austria's independence. This path included the character of its future military force and even who could join it.

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<sup>2</sup> Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 43-4.



**Table 2: Comprehensive Unification Chart for Four Cases**

	Germany, 1990	Vietnam, 1975	Austria, 1955	Hong Kong, 1997
degree/type of external influence on unification <sup>1</sup>	strong but indirect	moderate but indirect	strong and direct	weak and indirect
relationship among external powers with regional interest <sup>2</sup>	US-USSR: conciliatory; US-UK-France: friendly (NATO)	US-USSR, US-China: détente; China-USSR: adversarial	adversarial between US & Soviet Union	US-Russia, China-Russia: conciliatory; US-China: tense
degree/type of domestic influence on unification <sup>1</sup>	moderate and direct	strong and direct	weak and indirect	moderate and direct
relationship between the two states at unification <sup>2</sup>	political standoff	political and military standoff	undefined (single government)	benign
relationship between the two militaries prior to unification <sup>2</sup>	political standoff, but no active combat	active combat up to unification	politically at odds, but no active combat	no history of conflict, but contact normally forbidden
dominant military force character <sup>2</sup>	alliance-centered, apolitical, soldier-citizen-based	revolutionary socialist armed force	apolitical, internationally neutral, soldier-citizen-based	socialist revolutionary, peasant/worker-based
minor military force character <sup>2</sup>	alliance-partnered, socialist, physically isolated from population	republican conscripted armed force	scattered left-wing and right-wing remnants, otherwise nonexistent	constitutional monarchy garrison force of mixed nationality
character of unification <sup>4</sup>	unplanned, rapid, mostly peaceful	planned by one side, slow at first but rapid in the endgame, violent	faltering progress followed by quick, peaceful breakthrough	planned, slow, peaceful
fate of minor force <sup>3</sup>	small percentage integrated, most disbanded, a few leaders convicted	imprisoned for political reeducation except defectors	integrated except for extreme right wing (Wehrmacht)	foreign resettlement or integration into society
character of unified military <sup>3</sup>	expeditionary-minded, only slightly impacted by integration	Offensive army and security force	same as dominant force before unification	little changed from before unification

*Source: Author's original work*

Explanatory Notes:

1. Primary independent variable
2. Secondary independent variable
3. Primary dependent variable
4. Intermediate condition

A moderate degree of influence is one in which there is no systemic change and no occupation, but external powers still have strong enough ties to at least one side to affect its political policy prior to and during unification. Those powers have an interest in supporting their respective side, but not enough that they are willing to take great risks. Generally, moderate influence is indirect with respect to unification because the decision ultimately belongs to the state undergoing the change, not the external power. This scenario describes Vietnam in 1975. The United States had supported South Vietnam, but it was not willing to commit enough resources or military forces to stem the North's invasion. Its decision was a contributor to the country's unification under communism, and hence to the demise of the ARVN. The US decision was arguably not the only contributor to the outcome, however. The Soviet Union exerted moderate influence on the other side—North Vietnam—by continuing its support of the regime both politically and militarily. Its political support for the NLF contributed to an improved political position for North Vietnam, and its military support helped secure the DRV's victory in Saigon. The Soviet Union did not direct the North to invade the South, however. Considering these assertions, the external influence in Vietnam in 1975 was moderate but indirect.<sup>3</sup>

Weak and indirect influence are paired in the final case, China's reacquisition of Hong Kong, because the other powerful actor with interest in the region—the United States—had minimal impact on the process. The United States expressed concern to China regarding how its takeover might affect the economic and democratic well-being of the city-state, but there is little evidence that these concerns directly affected how China managed the process.<sup>4</sup> Rather, China recognized Hong Kong's commercial value and promised to maintain it as a hub of free trade for all countries that conducted business there.<sup>5</sup>

A secondary independent variable related to external influence is the relationship among powerful external actors that had interest in the state undergoing unification. At one end of the spectrum, shifts in this relationship can lead to systemic change, as they

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<sup>3</sup> Alice Lyman Miller, *Becoming Asia: Change and Continuity in Asian International Relations since World War II* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2011), 140-1, 147.

<sup>4</sup> Warren I. Cohen and Li Zhao, eds., *Hong Kong under Chinese Rule: The Economic and Political Implications of Reversion* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 216-8.

<sup>5</sup> Cohen and Zhao, *Hong Kong under Chinese Rule*, 130-1.

did between the United States and the Soviet Union near the time of Germany's unification. The notable characteristic of this systemic change is that the two superpowers were conciliatory. That the Soviet Union sacrificed political control in Eastern Europe in favor of domestic reform was a boon for West Germany and a bane for its rival.<sup>6</sup> As discussed above, this influence was indirect because neither superpower was responsible for the unification process.

### **The Second Primary Independent Variable: Domestic Influence**

Row 3 of the table gives values in each case for the second primary independent variable, domestic influence on national unification. As with external influence, both degree and type characterize domestic influence. It is unreasonable to define strong influence in the same way as it is defined at the international level, otherwise every unification would come from strong domestic influence. Each unification is a mini-systemic change for the two sides converging into one, and the dominant state ultimately occupies the minor state at the end of the process (Austria is somewhat of an exception, which is why it is the only weak case of the four on this variable).

Rather, a strong degree of domestic influence is one in which the winning side exerts force to unify the state. Although West Germany consulted with the Soviet Union over the head of East Germany to work out the details of the takeover, this influence is still classified as moderate because the military only proceeded into East Germany once diplomacy had run its course. Furthermore, it did so peacefully and cooperatively with the NVA. Similarly, although the PLA marched into Hong Kong on June 30, 1997, it did so according to declarations and agreements that China had been working out with Britain over the previous 15 years. On the other hand, domestic influence in Austria was weak for the same reason that it was indirect: External powers occupied the country, and it was the Soviet Union rather than the nascent Austrian government that initiated the country's independence and neutrality. The Soviet leadership uncoupled "the Austrian from the German peace treaty," invited new Austrian Chancellor Julius Raab to Moscow, obligated "Austria internationally to practice in perpetuity a neutrality of the type

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<sup>6</sup> Frederick Zilian Jr., *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1999), 22.

maintained by Switzerland,” and promised to withdraw all of its occupation forces.<sup>7</sup> Although Austrian leaders had already been seeking an independent national policy, the chancellor’s role in this train of events was generally reactive. His signature on the Moscow Memorandum that came out of his meeting with the Soviets in April 1955 was the requirement for Austria’s independence to occur.<sup>8</sup>

Just as the relationship among greater powers helps explain external political influence, the relationship between the two unifying sides contributes to domestic political influence on unification. This variable is strongly related to degree and type of domestic influence from the dominant state, but events can sometimes give it a character of its own.

The fourth row of Table 2 identifies this variable for each unification case. Up until unification in both Germany and Vietnam, a political standoff between democratic and communist systems existed that prevented overt diplomatic discussion about unification. Between East and West Germany, this standoff did not escalate to military confrontation. Rather, the two sides began to normalize relations by the 1970s, recognizing each other as separate sovereign states.<sup>9</sup> This development made unification seem less likely and contributed to surprise in both governments when the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, deteriorating economic conditions in East Germany notwithstanding.

On the other hand, Vietnam’s standoff routinely overflowed into the military arena, in which the decisive effort for unification took place. As the North Vietnamese military grew in power and grabbed combat victories between 1972 and 1975, unification became more, rather than less, likely.

In Austria, the relationship between two sides was rather undefined. Although a division existed among the occupying powers in the country, Austria had a single government under the occupation. The government began with strong socialist ties only because the Soviet Union had established it in 1945. The first national vote, however, cast almost all Communist sympathizers out of the government and replaced them mostly with moderates—a sign that the population was more unified and neutral in its political

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<sup>7</sup> William B. Bader, *Austria between East and West, 1945-1955* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1966), 185.

<sup>8</sup> Bader, *Austria between East and West*, 185

<sup>9</sup> Kang Suk Rhee, “Korea’s Unification: The Applicability of the German Experience,” *Asian Survey* 33, no. 4 (April 1993): 365-6.

views. This political stance, which shaped the new military as well as the government, also helped make the Soviet Union realize that its efforts to secure Austria as a Communist state were futile and contributed to a peaceful unification process.<sup>10</sup>

Unlike Austria, Hong Kong and China clearly had two distinct governments prior to unification: one British and one Chinese. In contrast to the opposite halves of Germany and Vietnam, however, conflict did not mark the relationship between them. The two governments were very different politically—one democratic with allegiance to a queen and the other Communist with allegiance to a political party—but China had always received economic benefits from the unique position Hong Kong had established for itself in international trade and finance. Therefore, it had usually overlooked what went on inside the city-state's borders.<sup>11</sup> This situation contributed to a peaceful unification in which the two sides honored set agreements and, most importantly for this study, cooperated in the conduct of a ceremonial military changeover.

### **External vs. Domestic Influence**

A combined analysis of the two primary independent variables in each case reveals a strong link. As Table 2 shows, the two primary independent variables complement each other. If international influence is direct, then domestic influence is indirect, and vice-versa. Furthermore, both variables for the same case cannot be weak, nor can they both be strong. In the most peaceful case, Hong Kong, at least one variable (domestic) is still moderate in value; the other (external) is weak. In the most violent case, Vietnam, neither variable is weak—one (domestic) is strong and the other (external) is moderate. Regardless of the case, one variable is weightier than the other in its impact on the unification process. Degree and strength are two ways of describing this weight in the non-linear analysis of unification dynamics.

By combining the results above with the secondary independent variables, it is possible to make a more general conclusion about unification in states of perceived strategic significance to external powers, with implications for the dependent variables (see Figure 1, page 16). Simply put, the character of unification depends on the weightier

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<sup>10</sup> James Jay Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War: The Struggle for Occupied Austria*, Texas A & M University Military History Series 81 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 54, 57, 189.

<sup>11</sup> Cohen and Zhao, *Hong Kong under Chinese Rule*, 9.

variable—external or domestic influence—and whether the relationship between (or among) sides in that variable is conciliatory or adversarial. One corollary of this assertion is that even if the relationship among the weaker players in the unification process is opposite that of the stronger players, the stronger players will still dominate the unification process. For example, because international influence—shaped heavily by a thawing of the Cold War—initially played a weightier role than domestic influence in the unification of Germany, the political standoff that had existed for decades between East and West Germany had little effect on the process. As Chapter 3 showed, political division did contribute to the refusal of the *Bundeswehr* to assimilate larger numbers of NVA personnel into its ranks, but it did not prevent the *Bundeswehr*'s takeover from being a highly peaceful process.

In Vietnam, a somewhat opposite case unfolded. Even though US-China and US-Soviet relations had reached détente, external influence on Vietnam's unification was only moderate and indirect. Therefore, it could not offset the adversarial relationship between North and South Vietnam that played out militarily. North Vietnam's perception of the Second Indochina War as a war of independence rather than a proxy conflict of the two Cold War superpowers is largely responsible for this violent element.

The above conclusion does not apply to the cases of Austria and Hong Kong, however, because these entities did not carry enough strategic significance for the external powers in the region. Although the Soviet Union played a strong and direct role in Austria's independence and neutrality, these outcomes were concessions, and the Soviet Union attempted to turn them into propaganda against the United States.<sup>12</sup> The Soviets would not make the same concessions to Germany while the Cold War raged because of Germany's strategic position at the center of Europe and the symbol that Berlin had become for both sides.

Vietnam's strong Communist presence made it more worthwhile to assist than Austria, but Khrushchev's interpretation of the conflict in 1961 (see Chapter 4) makes it doubtful that Moscow would have intervened in combat against American troops to settle

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<sup>12</sup> Gudrun Schwarzer, "The Peaceful Settlement of Interstate Conflict: Saar, Austria, and Berlin," *Journal of Peace Research*, 35, no. 6 (November 1998), 752.



the question of Vietnam's political future.<sup>13</sup> Nixon's triangular diplomacy amid growing détente with the Soviet Union and China also tamed external influence on Vietnam, although revelations showed the Soviets and Chinese continued to provide advisors, equipment, and aid to the PAVN during the period leading up to unification.<sup>14</sup>

Hong Kong's incorporation into China was also of little strategic value to external players, particularly since the Cold War had ended some six years before. Although many of Hong Kong's Chinese immigrants had come to escape Communism, the United States no longer subscribed to the domino effect that had once sparked concern every time a part of the world succumbed to socialism. Two incidents were of some concern to the United States as the handover approached—the Tiananmen Square Massacre and Chinese navy provocations in the Strait of Taiwan in 1996—but America had no wish to seek the renewal of a 99-year-old British contract that was about to expire.<sup>15</sup>

### **Domestic Military Relationships and the Military Character of Each Side Prior to Unification**

Table 2 includes three secondary independent variables relating to the unifying states' militaries prior to unification for two reasons. First, the variables highlight the political effects on the states' militaries, both on the relationship between them (row 5) and the independent character of each one (rows 6 and 7). Chapter 3 delves into these variables in depth in its discussion of domestic political influence on the fate of the NVA after unification and the character of the *Bundeswehr* in a unified Germany, while chapters 4 and 5 explores them more implicitly as they relate to the primary political variables in Vietnam, Austria, and Hong Kong. The second reason to include the variables is that they reveal differences in civil-military relationships that affect the military outcomes of unification. The degree of a military's dependence on its government to function normally, its separation from or contact with society, and sources of military heritage that precede the division of the country are all expressions of this variability.

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<sup>13</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 147.

<sup>14</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 140-1, 147.

<sup>15</sup> Cohen and Zhao, *Hong Kong under Chinese Rule*, 226.



As the table shows, the relationship between the militaries of the two sides generally reflects the relationship between the governments. The political standoff between the two Germanys resulted in a political standoff between the *Bundeswehr* and the NVA. The SED's rhetoric against the imperialist West translated into hatred for the *Bundeswehr* among the troops, and political commissars in the NVA's ranks were largely responsible for propagating negative attitudes among the ranks. In Vietnam, political conflict between the governments of the North and South were less constrained by geopolitics than in Germany, and the DRV's long-term goals translated more easily into military campaigns.

As Chapter 2 discusses, the relationship between militaries in Austria was more complex, but it is helpful to conceive of the country's division in terms of time as well as space. In this framework, a conflict existed between the neutral, relatively apolitical military that grew up under Austria's post-war occupation and the politicized militaries of the Austrian Republic prior to World War II. Just as Austria's left-wing and right-wing militaries during its pre-war republic stemmed from the political factions in the republic's government, its apolitical military after independence came out of a relatively unified legislature that sought neutrality as the means of escaping the control of Cold War geopolitics. Under the occupation, the real division existed not in the Austrian government, but in the conflict between the goals of the Western allies and the Soviets for the country's future. The Soviet-fostered *Werkschutz* was in some ways the political descendent of the Austrian Republic's left-wing *Volkswehr*, but like the right-wing *Heimwehr* that readily lent forces to the Wehrmacht after the Anschluss, it gave way to a less politically salient force after independence.<sup>16</sup>

The military relationship between the PLA and the British-led garrison force in Hong Kong was much simpler. It reflected the delicate but benign relationship between the Chinese and British governments by the 1980s and 1990s. This relationship derived more from China's historical if somewhat grudging acceptance of Hong Kong's status than from any political similarities between the two national governments. After all, the

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<sup>16</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*. 182, 176; Bader, *Austria between East and West, 1945-1955*, 101-2.

PLA had fought against British forces in the Korean War.<sup>17</sup> As the last commander of the British garrison in Hong Kong wrote, his 1996 trip to a PLA base in Guangdong province to meet the upcoming Chinese commander of the garrison was “the first official visit by a CBF [Commander of British Forces] Hong Kong to China—at least since the Second World War!”<sup>18</sup> Likewise, the new Chinese commander’s subsequent trips to Hong Kong “were the first visits ever made by a PLA general in uniform” to the city-state.<sup>19</sup> These “firsts” were the cause of some social unease as the two forces prepared for the handover, but leaders from the two sides proved agreeable on most provisions of the military side of the process.

Nearly as important as the relationship between the militaries of the two sides in unification is the particular character of each armed force. Although the character of each military influences the relationship between the two during the division of the state, the character is also important by itself because it may have unique impacts on the security aspect of the unification process. This assertion holds true both for the dominant and minor armed force.

For example, the combination of the *Bundeswehr*’s freedom of initiative during the takeover of East Germany and the NVA’s strong dependence on the SED made disbanding the NVA fairly easy. The SED had crumbled to the point that it could no longer offer confident, single-minded direction to its armed forces, so the *Bundeswehr* encountered a largely headless force in 1990.<sup>20</sup> If the NVA had been more independent of the East German government or the SED remained a source of strength for the NVA, violence may have been more likely between the two military forces, and the entire unification might have proceeded differently.

However, another characteristic of the NVA made the job of the *Bundeswehr* more difficult. The West German army faced a greater challenge in finding jobs for released NVA members and establishing positive relations with the East German

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<sup>17</sup> Neil Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn: The Hong Kong Handover to China*, 1st English ed (London ; Washington [D.C.]: Brassey’s, 1998), 2.

<sup>18</sup> Bryan Dutton, “Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint,” *RUSI Journal* 142, no. 5 (October 1997), 23.

<sup>19</sup> Dutton, “Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint,” 23.

<sup>20</sup> Dale R. Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military* (New York: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, 1998), 76-9.

population, because the NVA's isolation from society had created suspicion among many citizens. As Chapter 3 explains, the commanding general of *Kommando-Ost* opened East German bases to the public and built relationships with local institutions in an effort to ease the military transition and recommend soon-to-be jobless NVA personnel to potential employers. This effort reflects the soldier-citizen concept that characterized the *Bundeswehr* as much or more than the isolation of the NVA that made the effort desirable.

Vietnam presents a very different military dynamic than Germany. Neither military was separated from society to the degree that the NVA was. As Chapter 4 reveals, family members often followed ARVN soldiers on their campaigns and helped take care of them. Although the PAVN's loyalty was to the Vietnamese Communist Party, it was dependent on native villages for both material supply and as a source of recruitment. From early in the PAVN's history, propaganda teams "went into the villages of Vietnam to energize and motivate, to raise the villagers' revolutionary consciousness, not by threat or use of force, only by means of communication and persuasion."<sup>21</sup>

This method of recruitment contrasts with the ARVN's. Volunteers were few, and the government resorted to a draft by 1961. "Over the course of the ARVN's twenty-year life (1955-1975), drafted soldiers represented about 65 percent of the army's total troop levels, making it one of the most heavily conscripted armies in history."<sup>22</sup>

The key to this difference in the recruiting between the two militaries lay in the same ownership of narrative that Chapter 4 discusses regarding the population and the government. Because the North possessed a more powerful national narrative to unify the army and the population, the PAVN did not need to resort to the South's "capricious and oppressive selective service system."<sup>23</sup> That most ARVN members were fighting for family by the end of the war helped offset their lack of national motivation on the battlefield, but having only a shallow loyalty to the government in Saigon made unified command in the final stages of the war much more difficult.

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<sup>21</sup> Douglas Pike, *PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1986), 30.

<sup>22</sup> Robert K. Brigham, *ARVN: Life and Death in the South Vietnamese Army* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 7.

<sup>23</sup> Brigham, *ARVN*, 7.

In the unification process, the PAVN's revolutionary narrative and its exclusion of the ARVN's political mindset made reeducation a necessity if former ARVN members were to enter socialist society, let alone join the PAVN. Defectors to the PAVN prior to unification avoided the same degree of reeducation. This suggests that the act itself demonstrated to the North an acceptance of its principles. It is more likely, however, that the PAVN recognized their propaganda value. Similar to the young villagers who joined the Armed Propaganda Teams and rallied their village to the revolutionary cause, defectors could bring the North's narrative to villages in the conquered South.

Although the military forces represented in the Austrian case have already been discussed at length, narrative also played a part in sorting out who would become part of the armed forces in an independent state after World War II. That narrative was one of neutrality, and the remnants of left-wing and right-wing militaries from the former Austrian Republic during the interwar period did not fit into it.

Likewise, Hong Kong Chinese that had served in the British garrison did not fit into the socialist, revolutionary narrative of the PLA. The PLA was similar to the PAVN in that it had begun as a guerilla force against stronger, conventional enemies. The PLA employed its strategy alternately against the Kuomintang and the Japanese, while the PAVN had used the Chinese "Three Stage Guerilla War" as a prism through which to view the conflict first with the French, and later with the Americans and South Vietnamese forces.<sup>24</sup>

The PLA had become a conventional force in its own right even before the establishment of the PRC in 1949. Like its operational orders, however, the PLA's revolutionary heritage was sustained by the CCP. This is understandable, considering that many of its senior members had once served in the PLA. It was more in-line with revolutionary thinking to send PLA soldiers to occupy the Hong Kong garrison than enlist any citizens from within the newly-acquired city-state to serve on it—even if they had previous military experience.<sup>25</sup>

## **The Character of Unification**

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<sup>24</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam*, 23.

<sup>25</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 103.

National unification is an intermediate condition in the transition from two or more armed forces to a single national military. This study used three means to classify unification in each case: planned or unplanned, slow or rapid, and peaceful or violent. All three are somewhat arbitrary, so they require clarification. A planned unification is one that the government of one or both sides takes an active part in making happen. By this definition, Germany's unification took on a nature of its own until the West German government stepped in to direct the process. In the other three cases, unification was largely the result of the aforementioned primary and secondary independent variables from the start.

The speed of the process is a measure of the time between the first diplomatic, military, or social breakthrough towards unification to its fulfillment in the form of a legislative decision, treaty, or contract. The object or location of a breakthrough compares most closely to an adversary's center of gravity (COG) in warfare, which Robert Wylie defines as the point which, "by manipulating, one can exercise the desired degree of control."<sup>26</sup> It is possible to argue that the COGs for the unification of Germany, Vietnam, and Austria were the Berlin Wall, Ban Me Thuot, and the connection between the German and Austrian state treaties, respectively. The dominant state had to target the other side's (or external power's) COG in a way that fit the character of the unification. Once it did, a breakthrough occurred and unification generally followed quickly. As discussed below, Hong Kong is an exception to this analogy.

Although the fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989 did not immediately lead to the desired degree of West German control in the unification of the country, the event was a breakthrough. If one measures Germany's unification from this event to "Unification Day" on October 3, 1990, its unification took less than a year—a rapid time scale for taking ownership of an entire state. In reality, the process of converting the East German economy, government, and military to West German institutional standards would take much longer. According to one West German analyst, however, the accomplishments of the *Bundeswehr* in this short time are impressive. By successfully taking over the NVA as well as other dispersed East German paramilitary forces and

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<sup>26</sup> J. C. Wylie, *Military Strategy: A General Theory of Power Control*, Classics of Sea Power (Annapolis, Md: Naval Institute Press, 1989), 76-7.

equipment by the unification date, the *Bundeswehr* “brought about unification more quickly and smoothly than any other part of German society.”<sup>27</sup>

Vietnam’s unification was neither quick nor smooth if one considers that the PAVN took an active step to achieve it in 1954 by beating the French at Dien Bien Phu. The formal division of the country at the 17<sup>th</sup> parallel, however, and the later intervention of US combat forces in South Vietnam diminished the value of this event as a COG. As Chapter 4 reveals, the real breakthrough towards unification was the ARVN’s defeat at Ban Me Thuot on March 11, 1975. After this battle, President Diem made the unfortunate decision to recall his forces for the defense of vital cities. Those forces’ retreat turned into a PAVN route and left a large portion of South Vietnam open for a Communist advance.<sup>28</sup> If the PAVN victory at Ban Me Thuot is taken as the beginning of unification, then Vietnam’s unification took place even more quickly than Germany’s.

The breakthrough in Austria was arguably the decision by the Soviet Union on February 8, 1955, to decouple the Austrian and German peace treaties. The coupling of the treaties had been stalling the resolution of Austrian independence up until that time. In a battlefield analogy, the Soviet Union found itself being attacked indirectly on the issue through flanking maneuvers in the form of US protectorate treaties, anti-Communist alliances, and arms buildups in various other parts of the world. Although US efforts were not focused purely on Austria—Germany held greater strategic importance—this fact does not negate the effects of these events on Soviet decision-making. As Chapter 5 discusses, the pressure pushed the Soviet Union to propose an independent, neutral Austria regardless of the future of Germany. The proposal came into effect with the Austrian State Treaty on May 15 of the same year.<sup>29</sup> Like Vietnam, Austria’s unification took about three months, but the Soviet Union led the effort in the latter case.

Hong Kong is the sole case with a lengthy unification process. While there is an identifiable starting point for genuine planning, the absence of significant obstacles and the more equitable relationship between Britain and China by the 1980s obviates the need for a breakthrough in the same sense as the other three cases. That said, the starting point

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<sup>27</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army*, 188.

<sup>28</sup> George J. Veith, *Black April: The Fall of South Vietnam, 1973-1975*, 1st American ed (New York: Encounter Books, 2012), 1, 172.

<sup>29</sup> Bader, *Austria between East and West, 1945-1955*, 185.



was a joint declaration that Britain and China made in 1984 concerning the transfer of the city-state to Chinese control. The declaration set in motion the formation of joint groups to discuss how the transition would take place, to include the transfer of internal security and defense.<sup>30</sup> That the planning could take place gradually over 13 years is due to the existence of a contract—the 99-year lease on Hong Kong—that neither Britain nor China sought to change.

The third and final means of classification, peace or violence, exists like the others on a scale. Vietnam occupies one side of this scale while Hong Kong occupies the other. Germany and Austria are in the middle because of the tense atmosphere, or rather the threat of violence, during their respective unifications. The distinction between the two is that in Germany's case, the tension was domestic, while in Austria's, it existed at the international level.

The reason that the character of unification is an intermediate condition rather than a causal factor in the military outcomes is that there is little evidence of a connection between those outcomes and how unification unfolds. For example, although more tension characterized the unification of Germany than China's incorporation of Hong Kong—perhaps because the former was largely unplanned—the *Bundeswehr* welcomed 20% of the NVA into its ranks, whereas the Hong Kong Chinese generally left military service.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, despite an ongoing brutal war against the ARVN, the PAVN still welcomed a few volunteers from its enemy up until Saigon's surrender if they disavowed loyalty to their former organization. Propaganda value had a lot to do with this decision.<sup>32</sup>

Post-war Austria is the only case in which the majority of its pre-unification forces remained in service afterward, but it is difficult to compare to the other three because its division was relatively superficial and short. That explains why the rivalry

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<sup>30</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 12.

<sup>31</sup> The German statistic is taken from Bickford's estimate that 20,000 NVA soldiers joined the *Bundeswehr* ranks and Gordon's estimate that 100,000 NVA forces remained on active duty at the time of German unification. The percentage is actually less considering that many more did not pass or elect to continue serving after the two-year trial period was complete. (Andrew Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 8; Joseph S. Gordon, "German Unification and the Bundeswehr," *Military Review*, November 1991, 21.)

<sup>32</sup> Andrew A. Wiest, *Vietnam's Forgotten Army: Heroism and Betrayal in the ARVN* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 264.



between external powers with influence in the country did not translate to division within the country that would have excluded any personnel from serving in the country's unified armed forces. The only forces that were officially excluded were former members of the Wehrmacht, and it had been disbanded 10 years prior to Austrian independence.<sup>33</sup> These made up a very large number—1.2 million Austrians served under the Nazis during the Second World War—but Austria grew a sufficient self-defense force out of the gendarmerie from those who had not served.<sup>34</sup> As Chapter 5 discusses, the armed force contained a few right-wing and left-wing members, but they did not generally negate the military's apolitical character.

### **Domestic Division, External Influence, Military Culture, and the Fate of the Minor Force**

If the character of unification does not seal the fate of the minor military force, what is the primary driver? This study shows that the nature of political division and differences in the military culture of each side that spring from that division primarily determine what percentage of the minor force join the unified service. This conclusion may be counterintuitive considering that many countries divide in the first place because of their geostrategic location during an external conflict. As with the achievement of unification itself, however, internal complications to assimilation of the minor force arise as time passes in countries separated by Cold War hostility. The internal collapse of one half of the country does not make these complications irrelevant.<sup>35</sup>

Nevertheless, the character of the dominant state's military can somewhat offset these complications. Germany is a case where the open military culture of the dominant side overcame the political divisions that had existed in the name of greater unity. Although assimilation of some NVA members was a national directive, the decentralized character of the *Bundeswehr* and its officers' aptitude for taking initiative at lower levels of command assisted with the speed and quality of the process. Guiding concepts such as

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<sup>33</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 182.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas Grischany, "Austrians into German Soldiers: The Integrative Impact of Wehrmacht Service on Austrian Soldiers during World War II," *Austrian History Yearbook* 38 (2007), doi:10.1017/S0067237800021470.

<sup>35</sup> Young-Hwan Jo and Stephen Walker, "Divided Nations and Reunification Strategies," *Journal of Peace Research* 9, no. 3 (1972), 248.

*Innere Führung* and *Auftragstaktik* fostered this mentality, and they were valuable in allowing the *Bundeswehr* to accomplish its tasks during an unanticipated event like Germany's unification. The service's relatively apolitical character and its concept of the soldier-citizen made welcoming the NVA into its ranks more natural than if the *Bundeswehr* had been loyal to a particular political party like the NVA was. As one former NVA captain exclaimed, "Had the tables been turned, I am convinced that no officer of the *Bundeswehr* would have been taken over into the NVA."<sup>36</sup>

Germany may be a near-ideal case in this respect, considering that even though there was less general tension (Tiananmen Square memories aside) and more planning going into the handover of Hong Kong, the PLA did not integrate any native members of the British garrison force. Beijing's decision to make Hong Kong a Special Administrative Region (SAR) may also have been an excuse not to do so, but the dependence of the PLA on a central political authority for most of its organizational decisions likely prevented it from considering the option. There is also the question of whether former garrison service members would have wanted to join the local PLA unit in Hong Kong if given the chance. Many may not have, considering the stark difference in military culture between the British garrison force and the PLA.

External influence can also have a slight impact on the integration of the minor state's military into the unified armed forces of a state. The NATO requirement for Germany to cut the size of its armed forces even as it unified further limited the number of NVA it integrated. The Soviet Union and the United States exerted additional pressure for Austria to exclude right-wing military members from its armed forces.<sup>37</sup> Austria's political neutrality, however, allowed the Soviets and Americans to gloss over the details of the military's composition.

### **The Character of Unified Militaries and the Rarity of Large-Scale Force Integration**

One conclusion of this study is that a unification in which there is a full integration of the minor state's military forces is rare. Additional case studies may be necessary to validate this conclusion, but factors other than just political differences and

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<sup>36</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr*, 112.

<sup>37</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 91, 179, 182, 186-8.

incompatibilities in military culture discourage integration. These factors include a focus on internal security rather than external security, the availability of new recruits, bureaucratic obstacles, gaining the trust of the minor force, and broadened definitions of national security.

### **Focus on Internal Security**

During and immediately after unification, social and economic instability may drive leaders in the dominant state to focus more on internal security than external security, delaying or precluding the integration of armed forces from the unifying states. Realizing that Hong Kong's status as a Special Administration Region made it largely responsible for its own internal security, British authorities in Hong Kong began to strengthen local police forces long before the details of the military changeover took shape.<sup>38</sup> This emphasis is also understandable in view of the absence of significant external threats to Hong Kong in 1997. There were no crises that would have required any of the incumbent garrison forces to join the PLA in the city's defense or even remain in place after the handover.

Relative to internal security needs, a unified Germany likewise had little external security incentive to integrate the *Bundeswehr* and the NVA. Furthermore, internal security was a higher concern for another reason than the need to secure East German military facilities and weapons. According to one author, following unification many cities in the former GDR lost 90% of their police manpower. Those that were left received little respect, and crime rose. "German police suddenly found themselves treated with contempt and dropped unhappily between bands of rightist extremists and scared foreigners."<sup>39</sup> These unfortunate trends resulted partly from an influx of immigrants and foreign workers into a society that had been 99% native German prior to unification.<sup>40</sup> However, institutional collapse and unemployment in the wake of the GDR's economic and political dissolution compounded them. Regardless, they demanded the attention of the post-unification government.

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<sup>38</sup> Dutton, "Hong Kong - The Transfer to China from a Military Viewpoint," 22.

<sup>39</sup> Patrick Ireland, "Socialism, Unification Policy and the Rise of Racism in Eastern Germany," *International Migration Review* 31, no. 3 (Autumn 1997), 557.

<sup>40</sup> Ireland, "Socialism, Unification Policy and the Rise of Racism in Eastern Germany," 541.

Likewise, Austria's priority after World War II was to rebuild from the inside rather than to defend itself, so it sought to employ the gendarmerie and police for creating the environment in which it could do so. As one author reports, "The aftermath of war in Austria brought a wave of crime and violence of frightening proportion. In the spring of 1945 desperate men armed with abandoned weapons of war roamed the streets of Vienna."<sup>41</sup> This state of affairs demanded that internal security forces be armed—an outcome the Soviets opposed in their sector but found they could not prevent.<sup>42</sup>

It was after geopolitical developments made the Soviet Union a more significant threat to Austria and the Western powers that incentive grew for creation of a national defense force. The existence of a porous frontier in the British sector added further impetus to the task. By 1949, the first gendarmerie and police units had been outfitted and trained for external security missions.<sup>43</sup>

The nature of unification in Vietnam makes it somewhat of an exception to the idea that the initial need for internal security delayed or prevented the integration of the minor military force. The reason is that the ARVN—along with South Vietnamese national police forces—were themselves the greatest threats to security. The day before the PAVN's arrival in Saigon, the PRG demanded that the Saigon government disarm not only its Army, but its internal law enforcement.<sup>44</sup> In its absence, the PAVN stepped in to enforce internal security. This plan was essentially the reverse of the situation in Austria: instead of turning internal security forces into national military forces, Vietnam was assigning internal security roles to its military.

This decision put a much higher post-unification burden on the PAVN, but it is reasonable for a conquering force to suspect the loyalty of the police of a defeated government. US forces in Iraq likely thought the same way when they released Iraqi security forces in 2003, but the circumstances differed because the conquerors in the Iraq instance were more clearly foreigners and the security forces were not disarmed. These differences may help explain why the insurgency in the latter case persisted long after the

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<sup>41</sup> Bader, *Austria between East and West, 1945-1955*, 99.

<sup>42</sup> Bader, *Austria between East and West, 1945-1955*, 100.

<sup>43</sup> Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 177, 181.

<sup>44</sup> John C. Donnell, "South Vietnam in 1975: The Year of Communist Victory," *Asian Survey*, A Survey of Asia in 1975: Part I, 16, no. 1 (January 1976), 4-5.

DRV had established general stability in South Vietnam, though further study between the two cases may be necessary to validate this conclusion.

### **The Availability of New Recruits**

For three of the four cases—Hong Kong is again the exception—the dominant state began recruiting new military forces almost immediately after unification, if not before. North Vietnam had attempted to recruit youths from the South through its National Liberation Front for years before the takeover of Saigon, Austria had begun the process under the secret approval of the United States before its independence, and Germany had begun recruiting soldiers from the former GDR less than three months after unification.<sup>45</sup> Recruiting personnel with no military experience may be just as conducive to national unity and economic growth as integrating military members from the disbanded force because those in the recruiting pool often need jobs the same as those who separate from military service. Furthermore, despite the burden of training new members, it is usually easier to conform them to a military culture than those that came from a different one. This truth coincides with the maxim that one cannot teach an old dog new tricks, and it helps explain why Germany set an age and rank ceiling for bringing NVA members into the *Bundeswehr*.<sup>46</sup> In Vietnam, it was particularly important to recruit new PAVN members because of the necessity of pacifying large parts of South Vietnam and responding to border incursions from Cambodia. Contrary to popular belief, the PAVN had nearly exhausted itself by 1975 and needed additional manpower to accomplish these tasks. Young conscripts were preferable to the defeated ARVN for helping to bring order to the state and its borders.<sup>47</sup>

### **Bureaucratic Obstacles**

The number of people and the time required to agree on the stipulations for integrating members of the rival armed force was a particularly salient factor in Germany.

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<sup>45</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 14; Carafano, *Waltzing into the Cold War*, 178, 181-2, 186; “Werner von Scheven on the Merger of the Two Armies, Spring 1992,” Konrad H. Jarausch and Volker Gransow, eds., *Uniting Germany: Documents and Debates, 1944-1993*, trans. Allison Brown and Belinda Cooper (Providene, RI: Berghahn Books, 1994), 248.

<sup>46</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 8.

<sup>47</sup> Pike, *PAVN: People’s Army of Vietnam*, 63-5.

Although Bonn desired that some NVA members ultimately join the *Bundeswehr*, the easiest and most financially expedient solution to maintain security during the transition to a single German state was to dissolve NVA units “as quickly as possible.”<sup>48</sup> Lieutenant General Schönbohm, the officer in charge of *Kommando-Ost*, pushed against this requirement because of the fear of unrest and the need to keep track of NVA personnel, equipment, weapons, and property.<sup>49</sup> This fear is justified in view of the consequences of dismissing the Iraqi Army after its defeat by US forces in 2003, but it is not a lesson easily applied. Asking a government organization to reroute funding on short notice in order to keep rival military forces on life support is extremely difficult.

### **Gaining the Trust of the Minor State’s Military**

Germany also faced the challenge of earning enough trust and buy-in from the former NVA members to convince them to join the *Bundeswehr*. Schönbohm was directly engaged in this effort as well. He tried to convince NVA members “that he was willing to meet them more than halfway in their quest for job security” and “that they had a future in a unified Germany, even if in the all-German army.”<sup>50</sup> The difficulty of earning buy-in was even more pronounced in Vietnam, where some captured officers from the ARVN chose prison work camps over the option of joining the PAVN after unification.<sup>51</sup>

### **Broadened Definitions of National Security**

Finally, broadened definitions of national security discourage large-scale integration of a military after unifications take place. As Gilpin writes, “In the modern world, economic welfare, rather than narrow national security, is said to have become the principal objective of all societies. This objective can best be achieved, it is argued, through economic growth, international cooperation, and rational use of the world’s scarce resources, rather than through war and competitive struggle.”<sup>52</sup> If the utility of force is decreasing as this argument suggests, then large militaries are no longer

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<sup>48</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, 74.

<sup>49</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, 74-76.

<sup>50</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 176-8.

<sup>51</sup> Wiest, *Vietnam’s Forgotten Army*, 275.

<sup>52</sup> Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 219.



necessary. When integration takes place, it is more of a token unity-building tool than a grab for additional manpower. This seems to have been the case for Germany, although upward delegation of security to NATO and the absence of a major threat at the time of its unification also made a large military unnecessary. This belief also seems to have guided decisions concerning the unified German Air Force and Navy. From the GRD Air Force, Germany only kept several TU-154 transport planes, some Mi-8 helicopters for search and rescue, and 24 Mig-29 fighter aircraft. It scrapped or sold all of the vessels that belonged to the small East German Navy.<sup>53</sup>

There is no equivalent organization to NATO in Northeast Asia, but the lack of a large external threat also motivated China to reduce the size of its military after the end of the Cold War. China is simultaneously improving the quality and structure of its armed forces, but the economic reforms begun under Deng Xiaoping at the expense of military growth have proven that it also has a broader definition of national security than it had under Mao.<sup>54</sup> The assimilation of Hong Kong Chinese into the PLA would have been a largely political gesture like it was in Germany, particularly considering the city-state's small size.

By at least one definition of neutrality, Austria also fits into the broadened security-focused category of states. In his book *Just and Unjust Wars*, Michael Walzer calls neutrality "a collective and voluntary form of noncombatancy."<sup>55</sup> It can be said that Germany's decision to constrain itself within the NATO alliance is also a voluntary form of noncombatancy, but as a larger state with a more recent history of aggression, Germany did not have the option to become neutral in 1990. At the time of Austria's independence, however, it had the luxury of freeing itself from both alliances and a large defense force. The option is a luxury because, as the country's low defense expenditures show (see Chapter 5), it had more money to use towards economic growth.

Vietnam's emergence from major combat actions at its unification and its perception of military threats to the north and west in the subsequent years make it the

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<sup>53</sup> Gordon, "German Unification and the Bundeswehr," 24-5.

<sup>54</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 105-6.

<sup>55</sup> Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*, 4th ed (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 234.



exception to this argument. As the second lesson below will discuss, Vietnam faced very different challenges than the other three countries.

### **Other Lessons from this Study**

Several other lessons with implications for military forces during national unification of two culturally similar states emerged from this study. First, lack of prior planning and rapidity of political development does not necessarily inhibit the winning military from engineering a peaceful transition in new territory, to include disbanding most of the minor military. Others have overlooked this possibility in trying to learn from the German case. For example, many South Korean delegations have made visits to the *Bundeswehr* “asking about the experiences made with the Integration,” but they have “left disappointed because they had thought that the Integration was much more planned and thought about than it actually was.”<sup>56</sup> The South Korean perception is not an unusual one. As Robert Jervis writes in *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, “Accidents, chance, and lack of coordination are rarely given their due by contemporary observers. Instead, they suspect that well-laid plans give events a coherence they would otherwise lack.”<sup>57</sup> National unification fits Jervis’s description of a problem that is “too complex to be amenable to total or synoptic rationality,” so it is unlikely that a government would be able to anticipate exactly how it unfolds.<sup>58</sup> In West Germany during the division, leaders persisted in their belief that the question of unification was still valid, but any plans they made for it to happen did not fit the reality of 1989. Their hope in spite of their unpreparedness paved the way for the political maneuvering room of the *Bundeswehr*, which confronted the NVA after its political lifeline had frayed considerably. The confluence of these factors, along with some opportune calls from NVA leadership to cooperate with the *Bundeswehr*, helped make the takeover of the NVA relatively quick and peaceful. The question to consider in reflecting on the German case is how a military takeover would unfold if the minor armed force is less closely tied to its government in a unification scenario.

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<sup>56</sup> Andreas Langenbach, “Sources on Integration of the NVA into the Bundeswehr,” October 26, 2013.

<sup>57</sup> Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976), 321.

<sup>58</sup> Jervis, *Perception and Misperception*, 77.

The second lesson is the converse of the first: Years of planning for unification does not necessarily result in a peaceful unification process or demobilization of the minor military. The Vietnam case proves this point. At the end of World War Two, Ho Chi Minh had quoted the US Declaration of Independence in an attempt to present the French with “a fait accompli already approved.”<sup>59</sup> He attempted to negotiate with the French for the better part of a year before his fellow revolutionary Vo Nguyen Giap became certain that war was necessary to achieve independence.<sup>60</sup> What began as a guerilla movement eventually led to the 1954 defeat of the French at Dien Bien Phu, a victory that secured Ho Chi Minh’s Communists control of Vietnam north of the 17<sup>th</sup> parallel.<sup>61</sup> Negotiations for nationwide elections failed, however, and another 21 years of armed conflict interspersed with diplomacy followed before the military breakthrough of “Black April” unified the country.<sup>62</sup> The ARVN’s publicized fate following its defeat was reeducation, but it became more like punishment as soldiers found themselves in harsh prison camps with little food or medical care.<sup>63</sup>

That Vietnam was a proxy war of superpowers laid over a native war for independence contributed to the length and brutality of the struggle. It is doubtful that Giap had planned for the degree of destruction and loss of life required to achieve the Communists’ goals. As sacrifices mounted, however, the war assumed a series of sunk costs. Periodic victories served to make these costs appear more worthwhile, and the two together likely grew what Clausewitz called “military spirit.”<sup>64</sup> This spirit and the North’s political narrative worked hand in hand as force enablers. The departure of American forces by 1973 was enough to tip the military balance permanently in the North’s favor, and its victory at Ban Me Thuot secured the ARVN’s fate.

Vietnam had to progress from a loose-knit European colony to a tightly controlled Communist modern state in a generation. Its leaders met strong domestic and external

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<sup>59</sup> Martin Windrow, *The Last Valley: Dien Bien Phu and the French Defeat in Vietnam* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2006), 84.

<sup>60</sup> Windrow, *The Last Valley*, 88.

<sup>61</sup> Windrow, *The Last Valley*, 637.

<sup>62</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 2.

<sup>63</sup> Veith, *Black April*, 495.

<sup>64</sup> Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, indexed (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 189.

opposition to their attempts to reach this end state, which represented a higher level of societal integration than China required of Hong Kong.

Hong Kong was a case where lengthy planning did result in peaceful unification, though not a continuation of military service for the native military forces. One distinct difference between Hong Kong and Vietnam was that by the time China was powerful and united enough to obtain Hong Kong by force, it was more constrained by international norms than Vietnam was in 1975. These norms reinforced a broader conception of national security, which helps explain the Chinese decision to honor the British lease rather than attempt a military takeover of the city-state. In contrast, Vietnam had a single-minded goal within a narrower definition of national security that led it along a violent route to unification.

A third lesson from this study is that even without the precedence of an active military conflict between the two states prior to unification, if the winning state has enough political and legal backing, it may assume the role of judge over the actions of the rival state's soldiers and military leaders. This lesson comes from Germany's decision to prosecute and convict several former NVA border guard members, the GDR's former defense minister, and the head of the NVA for the deaths of 68 East Germans shot trying to escape to freedom over the Berlin Wall.<sup>65</sup> In the trials, the German government argued the cases according to former East German criminal law: East German because it applied at the time and place of the shootings, and criminal law to emphasize personal responsibility. By the latter reasoning, the judge opposed defense attorney arguments that the Soviet Union was behind the wall's erection and any incidents along it "were the regrettable consequence of years of hostility between the eastern and western military blocs."<sup>66</sup> The judge determined that the defense minister and the NVA chief knew "their actions would lead to deaths on the border," so there was "an identifiable 'causal link' between their actions and the soldiers' violations of the GDR criminal code."<sup>67</sup> At the same time, the courts found themselves on shaky ground interpreting the laws of another country and applying them to military officials at different levels of a chain of command.

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<sup>65</sup> John Laughland, *A History of Political Trials from Charles I to Saddam Hussein* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2008), 196.

<sup>66</sup> A. James McAdams, *Judging the Past in Unified Germany* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 39.

<sup>67</sup> McAdams, *Judging the Past in Unified Germany*, 39-40.

Largely for these reasons, the sentences were short, varying from three-and-a-half to seven-and-a-half years.<sup>68</sup>

These outcomes make the trials more symbolic than substantive; they were efforts to reinforce publically what a unified Germany was and was not. They specifically condemned the elements of the NVA that had been most visible to the West, but by singling out a senior NVA and defense leader they also became a “blanket condemnation” of the institution.<sup>69</sup> In this vein, they affirmed Lieutenant General Schönbohm’s counsel to an NVA colonel in his audience during the transition period to “unconditionally free [him]self from the past of the socialist armed forces.”<sup>70</sup> This instruction was critical for those NVA members who wished to join the *Bundeswehr*. Generalized to any member of a defeated military who aspires to join his vanquisher, it is a command to reinvent himself to fit the interest of the new state.



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<sup>68</sup> Laughland, *A History of Political Trials*, 205; McAdams, *Judging the Past in Unified Germany*, 47-8.

<sup>69</sup> Bickford, *Fallen Elites: The Military Other in Post-Unification Germany*, 11.

<sup>70</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 180.

## Conclusion

In view of the cases studied, the integration of the minor state's military during national unification can be a highly contentious issue, a shared assumption, or something that neither side considers. A variety of domestic and external factors determine where the issue falls. On the contentious side, what to do with the disbanded forces becomes a debate about national identity, and veterans of those forces must confront their past through a new lens if they wish to continue the practice of arms. It may require enduring years of reeducation or even choosing to defect, though the latter choice hardly defines legitimate integration of one force into another. If integration of military forces is a shared assumption, it appears to be because the division between them is politically or culturally superficial. In a case where civilian culture is similar but military cultures are vastly different, however, those who served under the disbanded military must simply find new jobs. Depending on the unification case and the character of the governments involved, they may receive assistance in this effort from one government or the other.

None of these findings differ significantly from the hypotheses in the introduction to this study, since the fate of the minor force and the emergence of a new one—if it really is that new—are symbolic of the character of the dominant state. As the marching of the PLA into Hong Kong and their subsequent separation from the population shows, military takeovers can be symbolic without being too contentious. Since the character of unification is only an intermediate condition, time will tell in each case what actually comes of the takeover.

In the time following unification, some countries will be more sensitive than others to their international image, depending on how international norms and institutions constrain them. As John Ikenberry writes, “the creation of binding institutions” is one strategy to restrain power, while “the promotion of state autonomy, the division of territory to disperse power, and the creation of counterbalancing alliances” are also methods of doing so.<sup>71</sup> Germany was willing to constrain itself within the binding institutions of the European community, and how it handled the NVA and shaped the new *Bundeswehr* reflected its subjugation within NATO. Even its criminal prosecution

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<sup>71</sup> G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars*, Princeton Studies in International History and Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

of certain NVA members and leaders reflected how it viewed itself and wanted to be viewed within NATO and Europe.

Vietnam is an example of a country that pushed against restraints on its power, agreeing to diplomatic treaties only to the degree they helped long-term unification goals. The country's treatment of the ARVN both before and after unification reflected its relentless pursuit of these goals, and its decision to strengthen rather than demobilize the PAVN after it conquered the South further confirmed its perceived need to restrain domestic and external threats by force rather than to be restrained in any way.

In Austria, domestic pursuit of an independent policy converged with external pressure for its neutrality such that it could develop the small, defensive military force it had essentially hoped for. Not being part of NATO but still benefitting indirectly from its power, Austria could make a departure from its past and gain security primarily through regional norms of accepted sovereignty.

In Hong Kong, China sought a balance between projecting an image of strength and convincing the world that it valued the city-state's economic success and the *laissez-faire* sociopolitical structure that underlay it. As Robert Gilpin wrote, "every action or decision involves a trade-off, and the effort to achieve one objective inevitably involves costs with respect to some other desired goal."<sup>72</sup> Considering the different military culture of the British garrison and the bureaucratic momentum of the PLA, integrating elements of Hong Kong's small defense force would have been an unnecessary cost in the strength-accommodation calculation that China made. Since China is still a Communist state, it may fit the unitary actor model better than a democracy: decisions of top leadership are not easily shirked. On the other hand, differing responses within the PLA to events such as Tiananmen Square demonstrate that Chinese military and political leaders do not always see eye to eye.<sup>73</sup> Regardless, the PLA has so far shown considerable restraint in Hong Kong.

The question arises over which one of the above cases is the best predictor or model of future national unifications. The restraints on power that Ikenberry describes increasingly characterize interaction among states, making it appear less likely that a state

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<sup>72</sup> Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 19.

<sup>73</sup> Craig, *Black Watch, Red Dawn*, 104.

will seek to dominate a contiguous one by force. Nevertheless, some states still justify unification or incorporation of a part of another state on the basis of similar culture and language. The recent military advances of Russia into the Crimea region of Ukraine provide a current example.

The last chapter will attempt to make sense of one potentially explosive case of unification and the associated military outcome in light of the lessons above. The possibility of the two Koreas becoming one again is currently open-ended and ambiguous, but the United States has a national interest in the stability of the Korean peninsula and the Northeast Asian region. To what degree the case may resemble one of the four analyzed in this study will determine what policies the United States should put forth to help secure the region amid the political and military unrest that may occur.





## Chapter 7

### **The Application of Historical Case Studies to the Potential Unification of Korea**

What can the four cases in this study offer in the potential case of Korean unification? Political leaders and scholars alike have looked at the German case to speculate about unification in Korea because of its peaceful and rapid nature. However, the persistence and closed nature of the North Korean regime, despite many predictions of its collapse, have made forecasting very difficult. The fate of the Korean People's Army (KPA) following a unification is even more distant and uncertain.

Nevertheless, historical cases—unification and otherwise--have shown that the decisions made concerning a defeated or disbanded military force can have strong repercussions for national and regional stability. Germany is the success story in these regards because it preserved security in its handling of the rival military, while Iraq in 2003 is largely a failure because the United States was unable to do so. Therefore, even if Korea's unification takes place in an unanticipated way, considering how to engage with the KPA as unification unfolds is a worthy discussion. The cases in this study are able to inform that discussion.

One warning applies, however. Because of the different contexts of Korea and the four other cases, it is important to use care when applying lessons. As Jervis writes, "By making accessible insights derived from previous events, analogies provide a useful shortcut to rationality. But they also obscure aspects of the present case that are different from the past one. For this reason, a dramatic and important experience often hinders later decision-making by providing an analogy that will be applied too quickly, easily, widely."<sup>1</sup>

To help avoid such pitfalls, this chapter begins with a discussion of the Korean background and context. Included in the discussion is an explanation for why Korea fits into the same categories as the other four cases. The second and third sections focus on external and domestic factors, respectively, that may affect the fate of the KPA and the character of a unified Korean military. The fourth section examines the possible methods by which the peninsula might unify, with short-term implications for the fate of the KPA.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976), 20.

Based on possible methods of unification, the fifth section compares Korea to the four historical case studies to determine the lessons each can offer regarding the two dependent variables—the fate of the KPA and the character of a united Korean military—and what policies the United States might pursue relating to those outcomes. For those cases that do not apply well to Korean unification, the section also briefly considers potential future cases that are more similar to them. This chapter finishes with a conclusion that sums up the lessons of previous unifications that are applicable to Korean scenarios and relates national image-forming in a unified Korea to that of the other case studies.



**Table 3: A Comparison of North and South Korea Today**

	South Korea	North Korea
state characteristics	presidential democracy	post-totalitarian Communist dictatorship <sup>2</sup>
origin of separation	The United States occupied the area below 38 <sup>th</sup> parallel, and the Soviet Union occupied the area above it; the two powers could not agree on a common government, and separate leaders emerged on to govern each side.	
population	48,860,500 (2012)	24,589,122 (2012)
area	38,230 sq mi	46,540 sq mi
GDP	\$1.15 trillion (2011)	\$28 billion (2009)
active duty forces (all services)	655,000 (2012)	1,190,000 (2012)

*Source:* All numeric data except DPRK GDP and land area data comes from *The Military Balance* for 2013. DPRK GDP comes from “North and East Asia: North Korea,” in *The CIA World Fact Book*. Land area data comes from *National Geographic Family Reference Atlas of the World*.

### **Korean Background and Context**

Table 3 above provides a baseline comparison of the two Koreas, revealing that their political systems and economies are poles apart. In spite of such stark differences, a potential Korean unification fits into this study’s categories as well or better than the other four cases. Contrary to evidence from the past several decades, Korea was an independent country for most of its history. In A.D. 668, the Silla kingdom overthrew the Goguryeo kingdom with assistance from Chinese allies and united the territory that encompasses modern North and South Korea under one independent ruler. Although dynasties changed over the centuries and Korea was generally a tributary state of China, it remained independent for the better part of 1300 years.<sup>3</sup> Though Korea’s language retains some Chinese influence, the 15<sup>th</sup> century invention of Hangul script by King Sejong and his scholars helped cement a separate cultural identity for the Korean people.<sup>4</sup>

Korea began losing its sovereignty in the 1890s, a victim by geography of two wars—the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5)—that

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<sup>2</sup> Patrick McEachern, *Inside the Red Box: North Korea’s Post-Totalitarian Politics*, Contemporary Asia in the World (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 13. The author explains that while still a dictatorship, North Korea is much more decentralized today than it was under Kim Il-Sung.

<sup>3</sup> Fred L. Huh, “Azimuth Check: An Analysis of Military Transformation in the Republic of Korea—Is It Sufficient?” (School of Advanced Military Studies, United States Army Command and General Staff College, 2009), 3.

<sup>4</sup> “How Was Hangul Invented?,” *The Economist*, October 8, 2013, <http://www.economist.com/blogs/economist-explains/2013/10/economist-explains-7>.

marked “Japan’s rise to major power status.”<sup>5</sup> After the latter war, Korea became a Japanese protectorate, and in 1910 it officially became a Japanese colony. The United States was not absent from these developments, having signed in 1905 “the Taft-Katsura Agreement which recognized Japan’s sphere of influence as including Korea.”<sup>6</sup> As a colony, Korea became an industrial hub for Japan’s expanding empire, but it also suffered misfortune as the colonial government sought to make the society Japanese by forbidding Korean religious customs and forcing Koreans to take Japanese names.

Japan’s defeat in World War II and the Allies’ agreements in wartime conferences that Korea would become “free and independent” appeared to signal a return to pre-colonial status.<sup>7</sup> The realities of the Cold War extinguished such hopes, however. The rather hastily devised line of division at the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel by the Soviets and Americans for occupation in the aftermath of Japan’s defeat became more permanent once it was evident the two former allies could not agree on Korea’s future government. The Soviets manipulated Koreans’ impatience to become independent by setting up a Communist government in the North, but the United States preferred partition to a Soviet-dominated state. After the Soviet Union defied a UN resolution to allow nationwide elections, the United States hosted elections in the South in 1948. The Republic of Korea (ROK) was established in May 1948 with Syngman Rhee as president, and the Soviet Union announced the creation of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) four months later, with Kim Il-Sung as premier.<sup>8</sup>

A situation shortly unfolded in which each side claimed to be the true Korea, with threats by either side to invade the other. By 1949, the United States withdrew its forces from the ROK, and after numerous refusals by Stalin and Mao, in 1950 Kim Il-Sung finally obtained their nod to achieve unification of the peninsula by force. Contrary to what the Soviet and Chinese leaders had thought, America and the United Nations proved willing to intervene. Though beaten back to a small perimeter around the coastal city of

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<sup>5</sup> Alice Lyman Miller, *Becoming Asia: Change and Continuity in Asian International Relations since World War II* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2011), 65.

<sup>6</sup> Huh, “Azimuth Check: An Analysis of Military Transformation in the Republic of Korea—Is It Sufficient?”, 9.

<sup>7</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 65.

<sup>8</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 66-7.

Pusan, UN forces rallied against the North Korean forces with help from a surprise amphibious assault led by US General Douglas MacArthur at the port of Inchon. The momentum of victory carried forces all the way to the Yalu River on the Chinese border before Mao's Red Army entered the conflict out of concern for national security. Together with North Korean forces, the Red Army then pushed UN forces back to the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. After nearly two years of diplomatic negotiations interspersed with periodic combat, the parallel became an armistice line with a demilitarized zone (DMZ) on either side.

Despite multiple changes in leadership in both North and South Korea since the end of the Korean War and the end of the Cold War backdrop to the country's division, the armistice remains in place and the border between the two sides is one of the most heavily defended in the world. Besides artillery batteries on both sides along the length of the border, hundreds of thousands of North and South Korean troops are deployed at the edge of the DMZ.<sup>9</sup> In addition, approximately 28,500 US military forces remain stationed in South Korea, supported by bases in Japan.

In fact, with the passage of time, the North's antagonism appears to have increased, not decreased. Despite the attempts of South Korean leaders between 1998 and 2008 to engage North Korea's Kim Jong-Il in the manner of Willy Brandt's conciliatory *Ostpolitik* in Germany, the North continued its provocations across the disputed sea border between the two states, used the money and aid it received to build up its military, and began testing nuclear weapons underground.<sup>10</sup>

Although the so-called "Sunshine Policy" produced a couple of economic agreements between the two sides, the ROK deemed the policy a failure, and it shifted to a strategy of only resuming dialogue with its ailing neighbor if the DPRK were to make visible nuclear concessions.<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile, through various propaganda efforts North Korea has attempted to "drive a wedge in the ROK-US alliance" and divide Korean public opinion, while at the same time taking provocative action in response to the

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<sup>9</sup> Moo Bong Ryoo, "The ROK Army's Role When North Korea Collapses Without a War with the ROK" (School of Advanced Military Studies, United States Army Command and General Staff College, 2001), 7.

<sup>10</sup> Kisoo Bae, "ROK Military Policy Recommendations toward North Korea" (United States Army War College, 2012), iii, 11; Victor Cha, *The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future*. (New York: Harper Collins, 2012), 196.

<sup>11</sup> Kisoo Bae, "ROK Military Policy Recommendations toward North Korea," 14.

continuation of US-ROK military exercises and increasing its nuclear weapons testing and missile launches.<sup>12</sup>

These aggressions augment the concerns of external regional players, but in different ways depending on national interest. The following section outlines the most important concerns of each country and how those concerns might play out if Korea unifies.

### **The Influence of External Powers on a Potential Korean Unification**

As one Asian scholar has noted, “Four major powers in the region, the United States, China, Japan, and Russia, continue to hold the key to the political future of the Korean Peninsula.”<sup>13</sup> Each has exerted significant influence on the peninsula in the past and will likely seek input in the shape of a unified Korea, to possibly include the character of its future armed forces. As with past unifications in other places, the current relationships among the external powers will make some difference in how they approach these issues. A collective regional security structure like NATO in which to frame regional discussions about Korean unification is relatively absent in Asia, however. As a result, players are more likely to put national interest or demands that neighbors make reparations for past offenses above cooperative efforts in forming policies about the future of a unified Korea. The question remains whether organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations + Korea, China, and Japan (ASEAN+3) or the Asian Regional Forum (ARF) become robust enough to unite regional players in agreement on the Korean issue. So far, one of the few agreements among the four powers is that a united Korea should not have nuclear weapons.

### **The United States**

The United States’ 2010 National Security Strategy promotes the value of the 60-year-old US-ROK alliance as part of the “bedrock of security in Asia and a foundation of prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.”<sup>14</sup> In the Joint Communiqué issued

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<sup>12</sup> “Defense White Paper” (The Ministry of National Defense, Republic of Korea, 2012), [http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/mnd\\_eng/upload/pblicitn/PBLICTNEBOOK\\_201308141005219260.pdf](http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/mnd_eng/upload/pblicitn/PBLICTNEBOOK_201308141005219260.pdf), 28.

<sup>13</sup> Fei-Ling Wang, “Joining the Major Powers for the Status Quo: China’s Views and Policy on Korean Reunification,” *Pacific Affairs* 72, no. 2 (Summer 1999), 167.

<sup>14</sup> The White House, “2010 United States National Security Strategy,” May 2010, 42.

in October 2012 at a Security Consultative Meeting with South Korea, the United States reinforced this sentiment by restating its commitment to the current US Forces in Korea (USFK) troop levels.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, the United States seeks the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and is working through the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to “hold...North Korea accountable for their failure to meet international obligations.”<sup>16</sup>

Like South Korea in the last five years, the United States has refused to offer the North diplomatic or economic concessions unless it meets demands to halt and reverse its nuclear testing. It realizes that if North Korea ever employed its weapons, regional security would quickly disintegrate as other regional players respond militarily. Depending on the presidential administration, the United States has also coupled nuclear and human rights issues in dealing with the North.

In view of these concerns, if Korea unites, one of the top US priorities would be securing the North’s nuclear facilities, preferably by ROK or US forces. In addition, the United States would likely continue to maintain a military presence alongside ROK forces and—possibly as part of a wider UN peacekeeping contingent—assist with the disarming of the KPA. The United States must consider the interests of other regional players, however, in forming a strategy for a peaceful unification.

## **China**

China values the Korean peninsula as a valuable lever in its relationship with the United States, and for that reason it currently prefers the status quo. “The reunification process would likely take away the DPRK as a buffer zone and a major bargaining chip between the PRC and the United States. China’s influence on the Korean Peninsula would also likely diminish.”<sup>17</sup> Interestingly, China approves of the US-ROK alliance to the degree it contributes to the status quo in North Korea.<sup>18</sup>

China also prefers avoiding a unification scenario because “the expected waves of refugees from North Korea would pose a high and immediate cost to China’s

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<sup>15</sup> “Defense White Paper” (The Ministry of National Defense, Republic of Korea, 2012), [http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/mnd\\_eng/upload/pblicitn/PBLICTNEBOOK\\_201308141005219260.pdf](http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/mnd_eng/upload/pblicitn/PBLICTNEBOOK_201308141005219260.pdf), 18.

<sup>16</sup> The White House, “2010 United States National Security Strategy,” May 2010, 4, 23.

<sup>17</sup> Wang, “Joining the Major Powers for the Status Quo: China’s Views and Policy on Korean Reunification,” 179.

<sup>18</sup> Wang, “Joining the Major Powers for the Status Quo,” 176.



northeast region.”<sup>19</sup> China currently attempts to discourage such activity by classifying refugees as “illegal economic migrants,” and returning them to North Korea.<sup>20</sup>

Nevertheless, there are some potential long-term gains for China from the unification of Korea that might outweigh short-term losses. First, the refugee crisis may only be temporary. A united Korea that stabilizes quickly will alleviate the problem, lifting China’s current burdens of maintaining a large armed force on the North Korean border and sustaining a failed state.<sup>21</sup> Second, a unified Korea may be a more effective counterweight to Japan, with whom China often spars over territorial rights in the East China Sea and still harbors some ill will toward because of Japan’s aggressions in World War II.<sup>22</sup>

In order for unification to be acceptable to China, however, it will likely request an active role in the process and limitations on the role of US forces in the event.<sup>23</sup> Beijing may even seek the upper hand in directing unification before other powers can weigh in, particularly if North Korea deteriorates to the point that it becomes a threat to stability on the peninsula. China’s continued rise in power suggests that the farther in the future the North’s collapse happens, the more leverage it may have in such a scenario.<sup>24</sup>

Besides stemming the tide of refugees from North Korea, some of China’s concerns in the case of Korean unification would be similar to the United States: securing the North’s nuclear facilities and disarming the KPA. China does not want a nuclear-armed Korea, and it is fearful that the instability rising from a loose North Korean military might spill over its borders.<sup>25</sup> It is also likely that China would approve of a plan for Korea to assimilate at least some members of the KPA into South Korea’s armed forces because this process would reinforce a neutral Korea or even one that leans toward China rather than one that pivots toward the United States.

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<sup>19</sup> Wang, “Joining the Major Powers for the Status Quo,” 179.

<sup>20</sup> Cha, *The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future*, 178, 180.

<sup>21</sup> Ryoo, “The ROK Army’s Role When North Korea Collapses Without a War with the ROK,” 34-5.

<sup>22</sup> Wang, “Joining the Major Powers for the Status Quo: China’s Views and Policy on Korean Reunification, 169.”

<sup>23</sup> Ryoo, “The ROK Army’s Role When North Korea Collapses Without a War with the ROK,” 34-5..

<sup>24</sup> David Coghlan, “Prospects from Korean Unification” (Strategic Studies Institute, 2008), 8-9.

<sup>25</sup> Ryoo, “The ROK Army’s Role When North Korea Collapses Without a War with the ROK,” 39-40.

## Russia

There are differing opinions on Russia's position relative to Korean unification, but the roots of the disagreement may be a focus on short-term versus long-term interests. Like China, Russia is averse to the regional instability that would result in the short term. For that reason, Russia has sought a relationship with both North and South Korea. As mentioned above, the Soviet Union exploited its unique opportunity as a victor in World War II to craft an ideological ally out of North Korea. As such, North Korea provided the Soviet Union with an ice-free port on the Pacific, and in return the Soviets provided the country with military equipment and industrial goods at well below market price.<sup>26</sup> Influence was never dominant, however, particularly after the Sino-Soviet split in the early 1960s.<sup>27</sup> With the Soviet Union's dissolution, ideology gave way to domestic economic reforms, leaving North Korea without valuable economic support. Nevertheless, Vladimir Putin's first foreign visit after becoming president in 2000 was to North Korea, and the Chinese reported at the same time that Russia was attempting to craft a new USSR-DPRK treaty.<sup>28</sup> These developments suggest that Russia is not expecting the unification of the peninsula anytime soon.

Russia has also worked to establish a positive relationship with South Korea, however. This effort began symbolically with its participation in the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul.<sup>29</sup> It has also been engaging "in active economic and even military cooperation with Seoul since 1995, including sales of substantial military hardware to the ROK army."<sup>30</sup>

A more strategic outlook suggests that Russia could benefit economically and in security matters from a unified Korea. The possibility of connecting the Trans-Siberian railroad to a Korean rail line and jointly developing a pipeline that routes Russian gas to the peninsula and the Pacific are a couple of examples of Russia's commercial prospects after Korean unification. The event might also provide Russia a new opportunity in its

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<sup>26</sup> Cha, *The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future*, 123.

<sup>27</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 135.

<sup>28</sup> Ryoo, "The ROK Army's Role When North Korea Collapses Without a War with the ROK," 35-7; Wang, "Joining the Major Powers for the Status Quo: China's Views and Policy on Korean Reunification," 178.

<sup>29</sup> Cha, *The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future*, 122.

<sup>30</sup> Wang, "Joining the Major Powers for the Status Quo: China's Views and Policy on Korean Reunification," 178.

historic hope for more warm-water ports, and a unified Korea would balance against Japan in the region.<sup>31</sup>

If Korea unifies, Russia will likely voice certain preferences for the character and capabilities of Korean military forces. Like the United States and China, it does not want nuclear weapons on the peninsula, and it may prefer a limited US military presence in the region to balance against Japan's military capabilities. At the same time, it may prefer a US-leaning Korea to balance against a rising China.<sup>32</sup>

## **Japan**

Japan is "between a rock and a hard place" regarding the unification of Korea.<sup>33</sup> On one hand, "the historical relationship between the two countries and the potential economic and military power of a united Korea" create a strong preference in Japan for the current division of the country.<sup>34</sup> Ongoing disputes between the two countries over islands in the sea between Korea and Japan demonstrate that Japan is very sensitive to security developments on the peninsula.

On the other hand, Japan is troubled by North Korea's nuclear testing and increasingly successful missile launches. These are a more direct security threat to the Japanese than they are to the United States, and Japan has sought to enhance its missile defense and intelligence in response. If North Korea's collapse is imminent, Japan will likely seek the security and disposal of WMD as a first priority. Its next preference will likely be stability on the peninsula to prevent the spillover of refugees to Japan.<sup>35</sup>

Japan also factors China into any consideration of a unified Korea, since it is possible that "Korea would...be on the Chinese side in any possible future Sino-Japanese conflict."<sup>36</sup> If this happened, Japan would prefer a continued US presence in the region to help preserve the balance of power.

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<sup>31</sup> Ryoo, "The ROK Army's Role When North Korea Collapses Without a War with the ROK," 36.

<sup>32</sup> Coghlan, "Prospects from Korean Unification," 15.

<sup>33</sup> Coghlan, "Prospects from Korean Unification," 12.

<sup>34</sup> Ryoo, "The ROK Army's Role When North Korea Collapses Without a War with the ROK," 32.

<sup>35</sup> Ryoo, "The ROK Army's Role When North Korea Collapses Without a War with the ROK," 31-2.

<sup>36</sup> Wang, "Joining the Major Powers for the Status Quo: China's Views and Policy on Korean Reunification," 178.

### **The Influence of Domestic Factors on a Potential Korean Unification**

As with East and West Germany, both relational and structural political factors shape the interaction between the two Koreas. The latter often drives the former because of the different political lens through which each side looks at the other. In the case of Korea, however, a history of unresolved war has worsened relations far beyond what structural differences alone can account for. The division between the Koreas is not simply a case of perception and misperception, but a psychological barrier that has persisted along with the physical barrier on the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel.<sup>37</sup> Despite similarities in language and culture, this barrier has prevented effective dialogue between the two sides. It has resulted in “families torn apart, unable even to communicate with each other, and with no remnants of cultural or economic ties.”<sup>38</sup> More importantly for this study, this barrier dims the prospects of a quick, peaceful unification and casts doubt on the willingness and ability of the ROK armed forces to assimilate members of the KPA into its ranks if unification happens.

This section jointly explores the relational and structural factors that have contributed to the division on the Korean peninsula using one author’s perception about civil war as a conceptual template from which to spring. Author Stathis Kalyvas wrote that as a “transformative phenomenon,” civil wars are highly “endogenous”—they shape and reshape “collective and individual preferences, strategies, values, and identities.”<sup>39</sup> This perception of civil war helps explain how the tumultuous conflict affected governments and families in Korea after 1950. As the battle lines moved up and down the peninsula over the course of three years, the North and South had to assess and reassess goals, strategies, and even values and self-image. Individuals had to make similar evaluations as they decided whether their loyalty lay with a government or with family members.

As in Vietnam, the end of active combat in Korea generally brought an end to the “shaping and reshaping” at the national and individual levels. The stark difference

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<sup>37</sup> As with the German case, these terms are taken from Robert Jervis’s book, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*

<sup>38</sup> John H. Herz, “Korea and Germany as Divided Nations: The Systemic Impact,” *Asian Survey* 11, no. 15 (November 1975), 962.

<sup>39</sup> Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 389.

between the two conflicts was that in Korea, the unresolved nature of the war fixed in place not one, but two sets of preferences, strategies, values, and identities. Each of these will be explored in turn, with an emphasis on the effects each has had on the military forces of North and South Korea.

## Preferences

The most notable difference in national preferences that directly affects the armed forces of each side concerns North and South Korea's very different security needs. For North Korea, the KPA "is the central unifying structure in the country and the source of power for the regime."<sup>40</sup> North Korea possesses the fifth largest standing armed forces in the world and prioritizes those forces above the population, as demonstrated by the military's pre-eminence when disbursing scarce food in the country.<sup>41</sup> The preference rose to the level of policy under Kim Jong-Il, who "privileged the military above all as the key decision-making body."<sup>42</sup>

Although South Korea also maintains a very large military force relative to the size of its population, its dependence on the United States and the backing of the United Nations for the maintenance of the armistice have allowed it to accept a broader definition of national security. Its preference for national economic growth as a source of security has become manifest both in the government and among the population. The ROK Ministry of Defense envisions a smaller military force, and young males only join the military out of short-term necessity. After their two-year conscription expires, the majority further their education or pursue jobs in business.<sup>43</sup> Understandably, distinct strategies for unification reinforce the different preferences regarding military service between North and South Korea.

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<sup>40</sup> Joseph S Bermudez, *The Armed Forces of North Korea* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001), 17-8.

<sup>41</sup> Bermudez, *The Armed Forces of North Korea*, 1.

<sup>42</sup> Cha, *The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future*, 60.

<sup>43</sup> Huh, "Azimuth Check: An Analysis of Military Transformation in the Republic of Korea—Is It Sufficient?" 16-8.

## Strategies

B. H. Liddell Hart wrote that the problem for “grand strategy” is “the winning of the peace.”<sup>44</sup> For North and South Korea, unification is one way of winning the peace, but their national strategies for going about it are different. Furthermore, distrust has prevented any compromise. This was the case in 1972 when “Pyongyang and Seoul philosophically agreed that reunification would occur peacefully without foreign interference.”<sup>45</sup> Beyond that agreement, representatives could reach no consensus on what a unified Korea would look like. A 1980 proposal by North Korea urged the “formation of a unified national government under which the North and South would exercise regional autonomy,” with each region still able to maintain relations with preferred major powers.<sup>46</sup> Under the cloud of the Cold War, however, such proposals fell on deaf ears in Washington and Seoul.

Even though the Cold War has ended, the animosity between the DPRK on one side and the ROK and the United States on the other has persisted. As a result, the military may still figure into the ROK’s strategic options and the responses of the United States. The KPA has devised “a number of basic interrelated political and military conditions” that “underlie [its] offensive war strategy and belief that victory in a war of reunification is possible.”<sup>47</sup> These conditions stem from lessons learned in the Korean War and the KPA’s perception of the ROK and the United States. The lessons include a quick war that prevents outside assistance, military isolation of Seoul, and exploitation of America’s perceived intolerance for high combat losses.<sup>48</sup> The odds of the DPRK actually carrying out such an attack are slim in light of its military capabilities and realization that the ROK and the United States have trained together for 60 years to oppose it. However, the possibility should not be discounted.

The ROK’s strategy for unification does not include an option to attack the North or absorb it into South Korea by force.<sup>49</sup> Rather, the strategy incorporates “reconciliation

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<sup>44</sup> Basil Henry Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 2nd rev. ed (New York, N.Y., U.S.A: Meridian, 1991), 349-50.

<sup>45</sup> Coghlan, “Prospects from Korean Unification,” 1.

<sup>46</sup> James Kim, “North Korea’s Reunification Formula,” *Far Eastern Economic Review* 142, no. 48 (December 1, 1988), 22.

<sup>47</sup> Joseph S Bermudez, *The Armed Forces of North Korea* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001), 12.

<sup>48</sup> Bermudez, *The Armed Forces of North Korea*, 12.

<sup>49</sup> Ryoo, “The ROK Army’s Role When North Korea Collapses Without a War with the ROK,” 22.

and cooperation between the ROK and the North,” the “establishment of a Korean commonwealth,” and “complete integration of Korea through a democratic election.”<sup>50</sup>

The means of accomplishing these steps do not exist at the present time, so the ROK government has entrusted a longer-term, more subtle strategy to its Ministry of Unification.<sup>51</sup> This ministry aims to break down the psychological barrier between the two sides by “realizing a new unified Korea that ensures everyone’s happiness.”<sup>52</sup> From this strategy, the ministry aims at three objectives--economic revival [in North Korea], the welfare of ROK citizens, and a thriving Korean culture—all of which contribute to building a foundation for national unification. The tasks associated with this strategy emphasize trust building, small-scale projects, and practical measures.<sup>53</sup>

The starkly different strategies of the two sides stem from their diverging outlooks since the Korean War. North Korea has embraced totalitarianism and looked inward for its national strength. It has increasingly depended on its military for sovereignty and political power, with the result that armed forces often receive ample food even if the rest of the population is starving. Meanwhile, South Korea has sought strength more deliberately through a developmental state model of trade and industry with the outside world.<sup>54</sup> Its government has used more of its resources toward this goal, and its efforts have helped pay off in a GDP that is 44 times that of the DPRK.<sup>55</sup> As a result, even though it spends some 20 percent less of its GDP on its military than North Korea, its spending in absolute terms is more.<sup>56</sup> Since 1988, South Korea has also become a democracy, leading it to adopt vastly different values than its neighbor.

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<sup>50</sup> Ryoo, “The ROK Army’s Role When North Korea Collapses Without a War with the ROK,” 22.

<sup>51</sup> Minister of National Defense Kim Kwan Jin in the preface to the ROK’s 2012 “Defense White Paper.”

<sup>52</sup> Ministry of Unification, “Policy and Initiatives,” 2011, <http://eng.unikorea.go.kr/index.do>.

<sup>53</sup> Ministry of Unification, “Policy and Initiatives,” 2011, <http://eng.unikorea.go.kr/index.do>.

<sup>54</sup> Chalmers Johnson, “Political Institutions and Economic Performance,” in Frederic C. Deyo, ed., *The Political Economy of the New Asian Industrialism*, Cornell Studies in Political Economy (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 1987), 145.

<sup>55</sup> Cha, *The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future*, 111.

<sup>56</sup> Dennis Van Vranken Hickey, *The Armies of East Asia: China, Taiwan, Japan, and the Koreans* (Boulder, Colo: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 171.



## Values

The difference in national values affecting the relationship between North and South Korea originates in the diverse cultural paths that each has pursued. Although Confucianism continues to influence both, the North officially forbids any “religion” other than the worship of the ruling family while the majority of South Koreans either follow Christianity or Buddhism. Both of these strongly forbid the human rights abuses practiced in North Korea’s prison camps, leading South Korea to take the position of most of the West in condemning the country’s actions.

Other value differences also inhibit constructive political dialogue and present further challenges to both unification and the integration of KPA forces into the ROK’s armed forces. The DPRK’s concepts of *juche* and *songbun*, for example, are directly opposed to the cooperation with outside powers and relative egalitarianism that characterize the ROK. *Juche*, or national self-reliance, has been the tool of choice for the government since the 1950s to harness the loyalty of its populace, and it has been increasingly necessary in recent decades with the demise of the North Korean economy.<sup>57</sup> Ironically, *Juche* may be largely responsible for this demise, considering that North Korea preferred “superhuman zeal”<sup>58</sup> over trade to accomplish its economic goals in many cases. Although North Korea has sometimes accepted aid and assistance from foreign countries, the Korean Workers’ Party (KWP) and the KPA constrict aid from countries such as the United States because acceptance would jeopardize national security and present an ideological dilemma.

*Songbun*, meaning “constituent status,” is not a value in and of itself, but its subdivision “of the population of the country into 51 categories or ranks of trustworthiness and loyalty to the Kim family and the North Korean state” since 1958 has created a stratified social consciousness that permeates both society and the military. Like *Juche*, *songbun* has also discouraged the provision of aid to those in North Korea who need it most, and it contributes to their poor treatment generally.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Cha, *The Impossible State*, 37-41, 113.

<sup>58</sup> Cha, *The Impossible State*, 113.

<sup>59</sup> George Russell, “UN Aid Support Dwindles for North Korea, Syria’s Silent Partner on Chemical Weapons,” *Fox News*, September 6, 2013, <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2013/09/06/un-aid-support-dwindles-for-north-korea-syrias-silent-partner-on-chemical>.

In South Korea, an emphasis on cooperation with outside powers and general equality among persons in the state stand in direct contrast to *Juche* and *Songbun*, respectively. The ROK has demonstrated the first national value by seeking out multiple countries in its efforts to grow not only its industry and commerce, but also its military capabilities.<sup>60</sup> The South Korean government internalized the second value largely by promoting the equitable distribution of wealth as an objective for its economic stimulus programs, a decision that is believed to be largely responsible for an average GNP growth rate of 8.5% between 1962 and 1980 and an increase in GDP per capita by 963% between 1950 and 1980.<sup>61</sup>

### **Identities**

Such figures, however, have done little to dilute North Korea's strong belief in its identity as the one true Korea and the ruling Kim family as its rightful leaders. The DPRK has claimed that it is the inheritor of Korea's Goguryo and Chosun dynasties and Kim Il-Sung is descended from famous heroes of Korean history and legend.<sup>62</sup> The saturation of the propaganda that paints the regime's rulers as divine benefactors is evident in the unremitting loyalty of some defectors from the regime. These individuals refuse to blame "The Great Leader" for the economic misfortunes that motivated their defection.<sup>63</sup> Their attitude indicates that North Korea's identity depends very little on the economic welfare of its citizens.

In contrast, South Korea finds its identity in economic prosperity and recognition from the advanced nations of the world. Although the military had once been a "powerful force in ROK politics" and "was largely responsible for crafting the country's defense and foreign policies," democratization in the 1980s cut back its influence and shifted how South Korea sought to present itself to the world.<sup>64</sup> Its efforts to advertise itself as a friendly place for foreign investment and its willingness to abide by the International Monetary Fund's conditions following the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis

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<sup>60</sup> Hickey, *The Armies of East Asia*, 175.

<sup>61</sup> Johnson, "Political Institutions and Economic Performance," in Deyo, ed., *The Political Economy of the New Asian Industrialism*, 141.

<sup>62</sup> Cha, *The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future*, 35-7.

<sup>63</sup> Cha, *The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future*, 10.

<sup>64</sup> Hickey, *The Armies of East Asia*, 177.

testify to South Korea's attempt to craft a new image. The Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has recognized its efforts and reinforced its identity by admitting South Korea as a member in 1996, and the International Olympic Committee has similarly promoted Korea's identity by awarding it the 1988 and 2018 Olympic Games.<sup>65</sup> The North Korean attempt to reverse the Olympic Committee's decision on the 1988 games and its negative reaction once the games began prove that the event created an identity crisis for the DPRK. At least to the outside world, it was losing the fight to portray itself as the one true Korea.<sup>66</sup>

### **The Long-Term Impact of Domestic Differences on the Fate of the KPA and the Character of a Unified Korean Armed Force**

Differences in national preferences, strategies, values, and identities between North and South Korea have created an enduring psychological rift that makes peaceful unification seem unlikely. Furthermore, even if unification occurs, the rift casts doubt on the willingness and ability of Korea to assimilate members of the KPA into its ranks without a detrimental impact on ROK military culture. Korea will have to overcome several challenges or find a way to work around them. First, the sheer size of the KPA will prevent the ROK armed forces from integrating a large percentage of it. Since the North Korean army has traditionally assisted the population with planting and harvesting during critical times, funneling many of its junior members into such jobs on a more permanent basis may be an available alternative to assimilating them into a unified Korean force.<sup>67</sup> Assuming it is possible to arrange for such workers to be paid for their tasks, the choice may also assist with stabilizing the North's economy, particularly in the event of a collapse.

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<sup>65</sup> "List of OECD Member Countries - Ratification of the Convention on the OECD," *Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development*, n.d., <http://www.oecd.org/about/membersandpartners/list-oecd-member-countries.htm>.

<sup>66</sup> Jung Soo Kim, "The Proactive Grand Strategy for a Consensual and Peaceful Korean Unification" (Naval Postgraduate School, 2007), 36.

<sup>67</sup> David McNeill, "North Korea's Reservists 'Called back to Help with Spring Harvest,'" *The Independent*, April 9, 2013, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/north-koreas-reservists-called-back-to-help-with-spring-harvest-8566480.html>; Ju-Min Park, "North Korea's Peasant Army Gets Ready to Farm, Not Wage War," *Reuters*, April 9, 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/04/09/us-korea-north-military-idUSBRE93814F20130409>.

Second, the ROK armed forces will have to shake from the KPA's collective mentality an image of the South as a population to be liberated. Depending on the manner in which unification unfolds, this task may be easy or hard. Regardless, it may take time to persuade the KPA of South Korea's peaceable intentions. Without regular access to media sources outside the country, mirror-imaging and government propaganda has likely shaped their perceptions of the ROK for decades.

Third, to make the KPA effective members of unified Korean military services, the ROK must imbue into them a spirit of cooperation with other countries and an attitude relatively free of social prejudice. While North Korea's military had worked secretly with other countries such as Syria and Iran to help them develop certain capabilities, the idea of collective security is foreign to the concept of *Juche*.<sup>68</sup> Norms for the equal treatment of military subordinates regardless of social background may also be absent in the KPA, so some degree of reeducation may be necessary for any to serve in the ROK Armed Forces.

Fourth, it will be necessary to disengage KPA members from the propagandized notions that the DPRK is the only true Korea and the Kim family is its rightful ruler. The dependence of three generations of Kims largely on a godlike image and possession of a strong military for power suggests that if an ROK-dominated unification scenario does unfold, the family will be out of the picture. Such a scenario is far from certain, however. The following section offers the possibilities for the forms unification may take.

### **Possible Scenarios for the Unification of Korea**

Scholars generally conceive of four scenarios for the future of North Korea, three of which entail some sort of unification. The one that does not is simple continuation of the status quo, in which North Korea survives through a combination of rent-seeking, pursuit of nuclear weapons under the military-first policy, regional brinksmanship, and inducement of concessions from the West. The recent end of US and ROK offers to provide aid without some solid demonstration of cooperation on the nuclear issue casts

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<sup>68</sup> Cha, *The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future*, 39.

some doubt on the effectiveness of the DPRK's survival strategy. Nevertheless, the regime's resilience suggest the status quo scenario is the most likely one.<sup>69</sup>

The three unification scenarios are gradualism, collapse, and war. Of these, gradualism is both the "most favorable" and the "least plausible" one.<sup>70</sup> It conceives of unification as the result of negotiations between North and South Korea and an economic reform in the DPRK similar to what China has undertaken since the late 1970s. Its main problem, however, is that there is no evidence Kim Jong-Un would pursue such reforms or even be successful at them. Furthermore, to make them work he would likely have to dispose of *juche* and the military-first policy, both of which are pillars of his power.<sup>71</sup>

If a gradual approach to unification does take place, however, it may include slow but sure improvements in the relationship between the militaries of the North and South. Joint dialogues, exchanges, and training exercises can be valuable catalysts for these improvements, and they may initiate a gradual integration of values between the two militaries. They also have the potential to breed familiarity with the weapons systems, facilities, and equipment of either side so that when unification finally arrives, it will be possible to make wise decisions concerning what to keep. International concerns will prohibit nuclear weapons from entering into this calculus, however.

One note concerning a gradual unification scenario is important to point out in view of the claim made in Chapter 6 that unification is an intermediate condition rather than a causal factor in the fate of the inferior military and the character of the unified armed force. Because the description of a gradual scenario in the Korean case actually includes the building of relationships between the two sides, it becomes an exception to this rule. Chapter 6's concept of unification better describes the process by which the two Koreas merge into a single government and military following a gradual improvement in relations.

The scenario for collapse falls more squarely into the concept of unification as an intermediate condition because the potential to assimilate the KPA into the ROK Armed Forces depends more on the past relationship between the two Koreas than on the collapse itself. Nevertheless, a collapse is more amenable than a war to integrating the

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<sup>69</sup> Coghlan, "Prospects from Korean Unification," 1, 4-5.

<sup>70</sup> Coghlan, "Prospects from Korean Unification," 4.

<sup>71</sup> Coghlan, "Prospects from Korean Unification," 4.

KPA. The scenario envisions the fall of North Korea's leadership due to any one of various factors, followed by either a military takeover or an internal power struggle. Little or no notice may precede a collapse, but it may quickly prompt discussions between the ROK and external powers for intervention of some sort.<sup>72</sup> Securing WMDs and nuclear facilities will be a top priority of intervention, but the ROK Armed Forces may also have a valuable role to play in peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, and administration of the KPA in the absence of DPRK leadership. Out of this mission will come the task of assimilating KPA members into a unified Korean military—if such a task proves politically, practically, and socially feasible.

It will be particularly important following a collapse scenario to distinguish between short-term and long-term commitments for KPA forces to undertake in service to the ROK. In the period immediately following the collapse, there are several missions the KPA can assist with that require little understanding of ROK military culture. These include security details at northern military bases, disposal of certain weapons, border patrol, and humanitarian assistance—all missions that will help stabilize the state and lessen the burden on outside countries.<sup>73</sup> The latter two missions may require ROK supervision considering reports of North Korean abuse against refugees in the past. Regardless, in view of the ROK's "projected demographic shortfalls," it is almost essential that the KPA assist with them. The KPA will be more familiar with its own facilities, weapons, and equipment than military forces contributed by outside countries would be.

According to the third and most dreaded scenario, it is possible that Kim Jong-Un could conduct a military attack against the South at an opportune moment in response to a "precipitative" or even an accidental event.<sup>74</sup> He may launch the attack while his military is still strong and the United States is distracted with another conflict. In such an event, it is fairly certain that the ROK and its allies would prevail, but not without substantial casualties.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Coghlan, "Prospects from Korean Unification," 5.

<sup>73</sup> Bruce W. Bennett and Jennifer Lind, "The Collapse of North Korea: Military Missions and Requirements," *International Security*, Project Muse, 36, no. 2 (Fall 2011), 93.

<sup>74</sup> Coghlan, "Prospects from Korean Unification," 5.

<sup>75</sup> Coghlan, "Prospects from Korean Unification," 5.



The war scenario will likely prevent an assimilation of most if not all of the KPA into the ROK Armed Forces. Therefore, international assistance will be more crucial for stabilizing the country in the event's aftermath. The source and nature of this assistance will likely play a role in determining who the allies of a united Korea are and what character its armed forces take.

### **From the Past, the Future**

Which of the three scenarios for unification occurs in Korea will determine to some degree which past cases offer lessons for the ROK. As the following two subsections will show, the German unification case has the most to offer for Korea in the case of either a gradual reform or a collapse of the North Korean government, and the case of Vietnam contains some lessons for the peninsula if a war breaks out. The analysis of the German unification case breaks lessons down further into those that apply at the international (external) and domestic (internal) levels. The analysis of the Vietnamese unification case identifies two lessons at the international level: one concerning the influence of China and the other concerning the US-ROK alliance. As in earlier chapters, the lessons in each subsection will focus primarily on the fate of the minor or losing military, the character of the post-unification armed forces, or both.

The third subsection briefly discusses why the cases of Austria and Hong Kong are not as applicable to a potential Korean unification. However, it also discusses current unification attempts or potential future unifications whose characteristics may be similar to those of Austria or Hong Kong.

### **From the Berlin Wall to the Joint Security Area: Lessons Germany Can Offer Korea if Gradual Reform or Collapse Precedes Unification**

Germany is the case that scholars most often cite in trying to understand the potential of unification in Korea and the way in which it might proceed. The comparison is reasonable: both states were largely victims of the polarity of Cold War relations between the Soviet Union and the West, and leaders on either side of the divide in the two states argued for the superiority of their government. If Germany could unite, why cannot Korea?



The deeper one looks at each case, however, the more distinctions appear on both the external and domestic levels. On the external level, it becomes necessary to compare the Soviet Union in 1989 to China in 2014—the regional players with the greatest influence in each case. While both were in the process of liberalizing their economies, the Soviet Union did so as a struggling superpower. China is currently doing so as a great power on the rise. The outcome for the comparison between the German and Korean cases is that the Soviet Union was withdrawing from commitments to satellite states like East Germany, whereas China sees few reasons to allow a buffer state like North Korea to fall and is in a position to continue propping it up. Furthermore, under Gorbachev the Soviet Union was rapidly becoming more open politically; China is still relatively authoritarian.

The question also arises of how similar the European sense of community and collective security is to that in East Asia. The creators of NATO had envisioned its contribution to both community and security, so that “even in times of serious threat the leaders of the NATO member states took NATO’s community building aspects seriously and paid attention to the inclusion of these aspects in NATO’s institutional form.”<sup>76</sup> Reforming the *Bundeswehr* within the NATO construct placated those who were concerned with the impact of a united Germany and a larger *Bundeswehr* on the regional balance of power. In Northeast Asia, there is no such community-security construct under which a unified Korean military can exist. This absence causes concern to countries like Japan that stand to lose from Korea’s unification. Although Korea has no modern history of beginning interstate wars except between its two sides, as a unified state it will considerably alter the long-term balance of power in the region.

There are similar differences between the cases at the domestic level. In the German case, unification originated in “the East Germans’ desire to live like the people in West Germany,” along with a gradual integration of values between populations on the two sides in the years leading up to the fall of the Berlin Wall.<sup>77</sup> Such value integration made structural integration relatively easy in 1990. In contrast, although

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<sup>76</sup> Andreas Langenbach, “Shared Identity and Reconciliation: Can a Future Security Framework in Northeast Asia Draw from Experiences of the North Atlantic Security Cooperation?” (Naval Postgraduate School, 2013), <http://hdl.handle.net/10945/34694>, 24.

<sup>77</sup> Kang Suk Rhee, “Korea’s Unification: The Applicability of the German Experience,” *Asian Survey* 33, no. 4 (April 1993), 366.

South Korea has come up with structural plans for unifying the country and envisions how common values will reinforce them, in reality value integration is so far largely absent.<sup>78</sup>

Furthermore, three restrictions discourage North Koreans from reaching the stage of civil protest East Germans did at the Berlin Wall. First, the control of information in North Korea is such that most of the population does not know how people live in the South. Second, the lack of a functioning civil society would make it difficult to rally public expression in favor of social reforms. Third, the redundancy of government security mechanisms in the state is poised to counter any grassroots efforts at change.<sup>79</sup>

Nevertheless, there are two reasons for pursuing lessons that the German case can teach Korea. First, the slim chance of Korea uniting along the same lines as Germany does not translate into a low probability of Korea uniting at all. Second, if unification were to take place differently than in the German case, there are still lessons that Germany can teach about how to handle the losing military and shape the unified armed forces in a new Korea. Because Germany was largely a successful unification case in terms of the stabilization of East Germany, many of these lessons are positive. The sections below address these lessons at the international and domestic levels, respectively. Some of these lessons also have implications for US policy on the peninsula and in the region.

**The Unification of Germany: Lessons at the International Level.** Despite differences in the characteristics of external powers in the German and Korean cases, there are enough similarities that Korea can learn from efforts Germany made towards its neighbors on military issues. Considering US involvement in the success of Germany's unification and its enduring interest in the stability of the Korean peninsula, it can benefit from remembering certain aspects of the German case as well.

The first lesson is the necessity for the unifying country to engage proactively in dialogue with external powers in the period leading up to and during unification. The nature of dialogue will be different depending on whether unification results from a

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<sup>78</sup> Rhee, "Korea's Unification: The Applicability of the German Experience," 366.

<sup>79</sup> McEachern, *Inside the Red Box*, 89.

gradual “meeting of the minds” between the two Koreas or from a North Korean collapse. Germany seems to have been a mixture of both in that the two governments had recognized each other diplomatically and an integration of values was taking place between the two states’ populations, but East Germany increasingly suffered from economic stagnation and political incapacity. These latter conditions made it easy for Chancellor Kohl to bypass East Germany’s Honecker in his discussions with Gorbachev about European unity. This dialogue made the subject of German unity and the future of the NVA and the *Bundeswehr*—as well as the disposition of the Soviet Army in East Germany and a united Germany’s membership in NATO—easier to address with Gorbachev once unification was imminent.

As North Korea’s remaining great power patron and the hermit kingdom’s only other geographic neighbor, China is the first outside country other than the United States with which South Korea should discuss Korean unification, particularly in the event of a North Korean collapse. So far, China has been unwilling to discuss the issue with the United States. If a North Korean collapse is imminent, however, China may be willing to do so with the ROK.

As with the West German-Soviet discussions, ROK-China summits in the event of a collapse of the DPRK will also need to broach the topic of the disposition of military forces and facilities in North Korea. West Germany accepted that Soviet forces stationed in East Germany would remain there long enough to assist with security and the disposition of military materials that had been under their control. China does not have military forces actively stationed in the DPRK, but both the ROK and China may be interested in having a limited number of PLA units to assist with internal security, particularly near the Chinese border. Inherent in this discussion must be an understanding—similar to the one requiring Soviet forces to depart East Germany completely by 1994—that the PLA leave once sufficient stability is achieved.<sup>80</sup> A mutually agreed-upon date is preferable, with possible modifications later as the two countries reassess the North Korean situation.

In the less likely case of a gradual unification between the Koreas, there would be two notable differences in the discussion with China. First, China’s role will be lesser

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<sup>80</sup> Chauncy Harris, “The Unification of Germany in 1990,” *Geographical Review* 81, no. 2 (April 1991), 173.

and the role of North Korean leadership will be greater. Second, the discussion will center less on maintaining stability in the DPRK and more on long-term regional security. Regardless of whether North Korea collapses or reforms prior to unification, it is advisable to incorporate more external players into the discourse on this topic.

Multilateral dialogue provides the second major lesson of the German case, with implications for US participation in Korea's unification. Once "the United States had concluded that the GDR was disintegrating and that German Unification would indeed occur," the Bush administration drafted a plan for managing the "external dimension of the process" that involved the major outside powers.<sup>81</sup> As Chapter 3 discusses, the so-called 2 + 4 talks that came out of this plan included the two Germanys plus the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, and France. The inclusion of the latter two was important because of Germany's history of aggression in Europe. To assure Britain and France, the United States recommended that Germany continue as a member of NATO. Representatives' agreement on this proposal opened the way for West Germany to discuss with the Soviet Union the composition and character of the *Bundeswehr* after unification.

If Korea unites, the United States may have another opportunity to engineer multilateral talks among regional players centered on a national unification. For Korean unification, 2 + 4 talks would include the two Koreas, the United States, China, Russia, and Japan. This format is not new, as the George W. Bush administration brought together these same powers for the Six-Party Talks beginning in 2002. These talks centered on North Korea's denuclearization, with offers of aid and recognition in return. Although lack of progress suspended the talks in 2009, restarting them under the auspices of Korean unification has the potential to finally resolve the nuclear issue.<sup>82</sup> For the talks to take place, it is assumed that North Korea will have already collapsed, been gradually reformed, or been beaten in a war. Therefore, there should be little disagreement on *whether* the peninsula should be denuclearized. Rather, *how* to dispose of the DPRK's nuclear weapons and facilities will be the center of the debate.

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<sup>81</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's Army by the Bundeswehr*, 23-4.

<sup>82</sup> Emma Chanlett-Avery, *North Korea: US Relations, Nuclear Diplomacy, and Internal Situation*, Congressional Research Service, January 17, 2012, [www.crs.gov](http://www.crs.gov), Summary, 10.

In addition, as with the 2 + 4 Talks in Europe, the multilateral talks among the Asian players may also be a useful forum for addressing what a Northeast Asian community should look like following Korean unification. The lack of a common identity like that in Europe will likely prevent the formation of “a single overarching institution,” but it will be necessary to discuss whether the current Asian architecture needs to change to preserve regional stability.<sup>83</sup> That architecture is currently a “fluid and results-based” mix of “bilateral, trilateral, and other multilateral relations” that allow both the United States and China to achieve “positive-sum gains.”<sup>84</sup> A unified Korea may disturb this balance if it leans heavily toward Beijing, however, because an alliance between Seoul and Beijing would significantly weaken Japanese and US influence in the region. If the United States can form a consistent policy in its government toward China, it will be able to pursue dialogue with Beijing more confidently concerning Korea. Along with dialogue, the United States may be able to win the battle with China for Korea’s loyalty by proactively supporting Korean unification efforts. It must do so carefully, however, letting Seoul retain the upper hand in the process.<sup>85</sup>

A third lesson primarily concerns the role of an enduring US presence in the region. The maintenance of a few US bases in Germany to facilitate cooperation with European allies and serve as forward deployment sites may also be a model for American presence in Northeast Asia following Korean unification. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, all three of the other external powers approve of a US presence if it serves to preserve the stability that has existed in the region for the last several decades. The United States should not need to establish any new bases to pursue this end.

Fourth, as with Germany in Europe, the future of a unified Korean armed forces will need to become part of any Asian security architecture discussion. The combined size of KPA and ROK forces will be of particular concern to external powers. Currently, the total active duty personnel of the two Koreas number just over 1.7 million—larger than the active duty military of India.<sup>86</sup> Along with the financial burden of sustaining

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<sup>83</sup> Victor Cha, “Complex Patchworks: U.S. Alliances as Part of Asia’s Regional Architecture,” *Asia Policy*, Project Muse, 11 (January 2011), 29.

<sup>84</sup> Cha, “Complex Patchworks: U.S. Alliances as Part of Asia’s Regional Architecture,” 29.

<sup>85</sup> Coghlan, “Prospects from Korean Unification,” 11-2.

<sup>86</sup> “Active Military Manpower by Country,” *Global Firepower*, April 2, 2014, <http://www.globalfirepower.com/active-military-manpower.asp>.

such a force, regional pressure will drive Korea to cut its manpower drastically. The outcome of this cutback for the KPA is that the percentage able to serve in the unified armed forces may be even less than in Germany—not to mention barriers stemming from differences in military culture that candidates will have to overcome.

Fifth and lastly, like Germany Korea will also need to restructure its military to better contribute to the post-unification regional security environment. Equipping the *Bundeswehr* to be more expeditionary as NATO evolved to respond to contingencies over a larger geographic area was a visible sign that Germany had accepted its role in the broader security framework that its unification had helped create. To the degree that the disappearance of the North Korean threat frees a united Korean military to cooperate in regional and global security efforts, Korea may learn to accept a wider role as well. In the short term, the Korean task of assimilating the northern half of the peninsula into its economic, political, and military systems will absorb much of the state's attention. The effort will be incredibly costly, particularly if a war precedes unification. In the long term, however, a united Korea has the opportunity to become a middle power whose military makes valuable contributions to national defense, regional security, and global stability in a similar manner to Germany today.

**The Unification of Germany: Lessons at the Domestic Level.** As previously mentioned, the integration of values and the desire of East Germans to live like those in the West spurred unification between the two sides. As Chapter 3 discussed, however, the physical isolation of the NVA from society and its close ties to the GRD's political party filtered information from the West and diminished its liberalizing impact. For this reason, and the historically adversarial relationship that existed between the *Bundeswehr* and the NVA, the German case provides some valuable lessons for South Korea and its military. As with lessons at the international level, most below apply best to a scenario in which North Korea collapses or has taken some steps towards reform prior to unification.

First, like the *Bundeswehr* a unified Korean military has several reasons to integrate at least some of its former rival's personnel into its ranks in spite of stark differences in military culture and values. The first reason is psychological: The military cannot profess to be truly Korean unless it permits some of the KPA to continue serving. In unification, South Korea would be more than doubling its territory and adding a half



again to its population. An acquisition on this scale without coopting any of the territory's military forces will look more like a conquest than an effort at "reconciliation and cooperation," as the ROK's unification strategy advocates.<sup>87</sup> The second reason is social: As in East Germany, it would be unjust "simply to throw that many people onto the streets into such a poor, unstable economy."<sup>88</sup> The practical reason follows the social one, since hundreds of thousands of unemployed KPA members are likely to form independent militias and add to the country's instability in the aftermath of a political collapse. A final reason is military related: the KPA's expertise and familiarity will be needed to inventory, guard, maintain, operate, and dispose of all the equipment that will come under new military management once unification is complete. This requirement dictates only a short-term commitment by KPA personnel, but if a united Korea decides to accept any of the equipment as its own, these personnel will become valuable as cadre for training new recruits on it.<sup>89</sup> For most, however, their skills will not substitute for the professional military values shared by legacy personnel in the ROK military services.

The second lesson from Germany on the domestic level shares this reasoning: If a unified Korea desires for KPA veterans to become valuable contributors to the same military that existed under the ROK, it will need to mandate a period of transition that shapes them for service in it. For Germany, that period was two years and entailed a process of evaluation, reeducation, and socialization for each former NVA member.<sup>90</sup> If the member was not forced to separate prior to the end of the period and did not leave voluntarily, he became a full-fledged member of the *Bundeswehr*. For Korea, the road a KPA member must navigate to reach this point may be longer and more difficult because of the length of the two Koreas' political division and the degree of ideological separation between them. It will be too steep for some, particularly if they are older or above a certain rank.

A caveat to this lesson is that if the Korean military integrates a large number of KPA personnel, a change in military culture is inevitable. The hierarchical structure of

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<sup>87</sup> Ryoo, "The ROK Army's Role When North Korea Collapses Without a War with the ROK," 22.

<sup>88</sup> Frederick Zilian Jr., *From Confrontation to Cooperation: The Takeover of the National People's (East German) Army by the Bundeswehr* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1999), 95.

<sup>89</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, 95. The reasons in this paragraph parallel those that Zilian gave for integration of the NVA in his book.

<sup>90</sup> Herspring, *Requiem for an Army: The Demise of the East German Military*, 152.



the military may mitigate the impact of North Korean values somewhat. Nevertheless, the belief of George Washington that people who are placed in a new group “retain the Language [sic], habits, and principles (good or bad) which they bring with them” will apply in some degree to the North Koreans who serve in an all-Korean military force, no matter how much reeducation they receive.<sup>91</sup>

A third lesson from Germany arises from its debate over disbanding NVA bases quickly or keeping them operational long enough to make more informed decisions. This debate will be even more acute in North Korea because of the expected cost of unification and the lengthy ideological separation between the two Koreas. As Chapter 6 explains, the government allowed the *Bundeswehr* discretion in determining what NVA units to shut down, but it advocated shutting them down very quickly in order to save money. The *Bundeswehr* leadership fought for more time in order to make better decisions, however, because these decisions had both short-term and long-term consequences.<sup>92</sup> In the short term, keeping NVA units operational contributed to stability in East Germany by securing important military facilities and providing continued employment during a critical transition period. A second-order effect of instability in the absence of wise, timely decisions about military security and employment, was that the departure of Soviet forces from East Germany might be delayed. A possible third-order effect would have been a delay in other unification processes.

In the long term, keeping many units functional preserved important capabilities until the government could decide which to keep and which to let go. Personnel in those units maintained the weapons systems, facilities, and equipment that Germany might decide to retain. Although it ultimately did not retain a lot, shutting down the bases where the Tu-154s, Mi-8s, and MiG-29s were located until the *Bundeswehr* had the means of properly acquiring them would have taken more effort and money than simply keeping them open.

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<sup>91</sup> Gorton Carruth and Eugene Ehrlich, *The Giant Book of American Quotations* (New York: Gramercy Books, 1988), 289. The context of this quote is a letter to John Adams on November 15, 1794, concerning immigrants entering the United States.

<sup>92</sup> Zilian, *From Confrontation to Cooperation*, 74-5.

An ROK military takeover of North Korean armed forces units may face similar challenges, particularly if unification takes place as quickly as it did in Germany. The Seoul government and the military must agree on the balance between disbanding North Korean military units to save money and preserving them long enough to make informed decisions about the fate of units and personnel. “Studies find that the ROK will experience a 200,000-person gap in its ability to meet its currently projected labor power needs for a future military.”<sup>93</sup> Unless the ROK makes up this shortfall before unification takes place or anticipates relying heavily on outside forces, keeping critical North Korean personnel in place may be more important than the money retained from shutting down the North’s military units in a short period of time.

If UN or third country forces are assisting with stability, the government and the military must also coordinate when to replace them with North Korean personnel.<sup>94</sup> Other than the geopolitical effects of this decision, the most important consideration informing it is the degree of success in assuring the North Korean military and population of the ROK’s good intentions. North Korean willingness to cooperate in minor stabilization roles will be a good sign they are ready to take on major ones. Because of the ideological separation that existed between the two countries for so long, however, reaching this point may be a bigger challenge in Korea than it was in Germany.

Two final considerations applicable to a North Korean collapse that arise from the German case are how the inferior military force relates to its government and its society. The answers to these questions may determine whether violence accompanies unification following the collapse of a government. Regarding the first question, “militaries that are independent of politics and are self-sustaining autonomous actors tend to remain intact after the government collapses. Those that are most closely associated with political entities tend to fare less well after political disintegration, and therefore might be more easily reformed.”<sup>95</sup> Korean scholars Victor Cha and David Kang argue that the KPA falls

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<sup>93</sup> Victor Cha and Kang, David, “Challenges for Korean Unification Planning: Justice, Markets, Health, Refugees, and Civil-Military Transitions,” in *An Interim Report of the University of Southern California-Center for Strategic & International Studies Joint Study*, vol. Phase Two (presented at the The Korea Project: Planning for the Long Term, CSIS, 2011), 11.

<sup>94</sup> Bennett and Lind, “The Collapse of North Korea: Military Missions and Requirements,” 96-7

<sup>95</sup> Cha and Kang, “Challenges for Korean Unification Planning: Justice, Markets, Health, Refugees, and Civil-Military Transitions,” 11.

somewhere in between an autonomous and a dependent actor. Its need in recent years to become self-sufficient in the absence of a functioning economy has made it less dependent on political leadership than the East German military. Its loyalty to Kim Jong-Un under the continuing military-first policy, however, make it more dependent on political control than countries such as Egypt in which the military has taken over the government in times of unrest.<sup>96</sup>

In view of this assessment, the ROK may be able to reform many of the KPA personnel it preserves, but it should be wary of military leadership that perceives unification as a direct threat to its livelihood and becomes combatant. In such a situation, it will be very tempting for the United States to intervene, but it will need to weigh the military benefits of additional firepower and manpower in skirmishes that arise with the longer-term political benefits of letting the ROK take ownership of its unification. This decision will be difficult in the event of a DPRK collapse, although a national war would understandably make the military benefits appear much greater.

The question of the inferior military's relation to society is important because the answer may determine whether the military initiates violence against its fellow citizens if they rise up against the government following a collapse. The NVA and the KPA are similar in that both militaries' border units committed violence against their people when they tried to escape the country—the former at the Berlin Wall and the latter near the Chinese border.<sup>97</sup> The lack of direction from the SED when the Berlin Wall fell prevented the NVA border guards from taking action against those fleeing to the West, but the physical separation of the NVA from society made such action more likely than if they had regularly interacted with it. There is some hope for a peaceful unification if North Korea collapses because many soldiers in the KPA “have been conscripted to perform work projects, building dams, roads, and so on. These factors make it less likely that they would gun down mass citizen demonstrations prompted by a politically unstable

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<sup>96</sup> Cha and Kang, “Challenges for Korean Unification Planning: Justice, Markets, Health, Refugees, and Civil-Military Transitions,” 11.

<sup>97</sup> John Laughland, *A History of Political Trials from Charles I to Saddam Hussein* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2008), 205; Melanie Kirkpatrick, *Escape from North Korea: The Untold Story of Asia's Underground Railroad* (New York ; London: Encounter Books, 2012), 34-5.

environment.”<sup>98</sup> On the other hand, “special forces...are more likely to intervene against the people given their tight organization, closeness to the leadership, and lack of interaction with society.”<sup>99</sup> If DPRK Special Forces elements do initiate violence against the population or even ROK forces, South Korea’s military leadership may need to engage in an irregular warfare campaign in the North that couples kinetic strike against guerilla-like Special Forces with stabilization operations among the population. Needless to say, it is highly unlikely that a unified Korean military would include veterans of North Korean Special Forces elements.

As stated, most of the lessons above apply in a collapse or gradualism scenario. The remote possibility of a unification that proceeds directly from a war between the two Koreas brings to mind a different historical case.

### **From the Seventeenth to the Thirty-Eighth Parallel:**

#### **Lessons Vietnam Can Offer to Korea in the Event that War Precedes Unification**

Although the possibility of a war on the Korean peninsula is slim today, the Second Indochina War offers lessons for both containment of the conflict and US commitment to the ROK alliance if one breaks out. The first lesson concerns the United States’ and South Korea’s relationship with China. Although China supported North Vietnam militarily, the United States was able to carry on the war without its active intervention. America’s departure from Vietnam without a true victory does not negate this lesson, since improvement of US relations with China had preceded that departure. On the other hand, the analysis holds out the possibility that if the United States had been the victor in Vietnam, relations with China may have been more tenuous. This counterfactual outcome has implications for the potential unification of Korea under a democratic government and China’s acceptance of a post-unification Korean military. The presence of nuclear weapons development facilities in the DPRK is another factor affecting Chinese influence in an armed conflict on the Korean peninsula that was not present in Vietnam. US policy for a war on the Korean peninsula that leads to unification

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<sup>98</sup> Cha and Kang, “Challenges for Korean Unification Planning: Justice, Markets, Health, Refugees, and Civil-Military Transitions,” 11.

<sup>99</sup> Cha and Kang, “Challenges for Korean Unification Planning: Justice, Markets, Health, Refugees, and Civil-Military Transitions,” 11.

should consider the similarities and the differences between that war and the US experience in Vietnam.

The second lesson from Vietnam concerns how the US-ROK alliance can generate the necessary level of US support in case of a North Korean attack while still encouraging the ROK to take ownership for its own defense role. This is a negative lesson in the sense that America could not find this balance with the ARVN in Vietnam.

**The Unification of Vietnam: Lessons for US-China Relations.** China's historical relationships with Vietnam and Korea and a shared border with both explain China's enduring interest in the stability and political leanings of both countries. Both the Vietnamese and the Koreans were among the "Sinified tributaries" of the Han Chinese, and Chinese characters "formed the foundation of the traditional writing systems" of both countries.<sup>100</sup> These similarities between Vietnam and Korea in their relationship to China have important implications for US-China and ROK-China relations if an active war breaks out on the peninsula. The development of these relations will ultimately impact the fate of the KPA and the character of a post-unification Korean armed forces.

If an armed conflict erupts on the Korean peninsula, two important questions the United States will need to address is whether and how to employ its military forces north of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. Understanding how China may react should be a prime consideration in answering those questions.

In modern history, China has valued the sovereignty of Vietnam and Korea as long as that sovereignty contributed to stability. In 1950, China perceived an unacceptable level of instability on its borders as US and UN forces pushed towards the Yalu River. As a result, it launched an invasion into North Korea against those forces. In 1979, China perceived the value of breaking Vietnam's sovereignty to be greater than maintaining stability on the China-Vietnam border. By its invading the country, China sought to "confirm that Moscow would not honor its treaty obligations to intervene on Vietnam's behalf."<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Bruce A. Elleman, *Modern China: Continuity and Change 1644 to the Present* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2010), 7-8.

<sup>101</sup> Elleman, *Modern China*, 414.

The positive lesson of Vietnam for US-China relations in the case of an armed conflict in Korea today, however, is that China did not intervene militarily in Vietnam during the Second Indochina War. Although the distraction that the Soviet Union posed on the opposite Chinese border further discouraged it from invading after 1969, even before that time the United States was careful to avoid giving China a rationale for doing so. President Johnson understood China's concerns, and he sought to avoid escalation of the conflict into a wider war with China by limiting most aircraft strikes against North Vietnam to targets South of Hanoi.<sup>102</sup> Although domestic political concerns largely drove Johnson's decision-making and his restrictions prevented attacks on many significant military targets, the constraints lessened the chances that aircraft would cross the Chinese border and elicit attacks by the PRC.

The United States could afford to be less discrete after the Sino-Soviet split and Nixon's diplomacy with China. Diplomacy's effectiveness was evident first in its effect on the confidence of US leadership in authorizing military action. The earliest example was Nixon's approval of airstrikes in January and February 1972 against the Vietnamese DMZ and the area where Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam intersected. These operations ceased in time for Nixon's departure for a diplomatic visit to China on February 17. US confidence in approving armed reconnaissance near the Chinese border later the same year testified to the success of America's normalization of relations with the PRC.<sup>103</sup>

Diplomacy's effectiveness was also evident in China's restraint the same year following a few US mistakes during operations against North Vietnam. These included a "US incursion and air attack on Chinese buildings" and "splinter damage to Chinese ships from American combat operations."<sup>104</sup> Although Beijing issued warnings to Washington over these incidents, its response differed markedly from five years before, when the Chinese had shot down two US aircraft for inadvertently crossing the Chinese border north of Hanoi.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Lyndon Baines Johnson, *Lyndon Baines Johnson, The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963-1969* (New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 117.

<sup>103</sup> Randolph, *Powerful and Brutal Weapons*, 50-1, 296.

<sup>104</sup> Randolph, *Powerful and Brutal Weapons*, 296.

<sup>105</sup> Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam, a History*, 2nd rev. and updated ed (New York, N.Y: Penguin Books, 1997), 521-2.



The outcomes above offer two lessons for any US military action that takes place against North Korea in the case of a war on the peninsula. First, the United States should exercise caution in North Korea as it seeks to align military operations with political goals. It may need to time certain military action against North Korea with diplomatic visits to the PRC that emphasize the two nations' common interest in stability on the peninsula.

Second, the United States needs to preserve normal relations with China so that communication between leaders rather than military provocation is a first resort if either nation's military makes an oversight in judgment that affects the other. This way, China and the United States will prevent a spiral of misperception in their relationship.

Three differences between the Second Indochina War and a potential military conflict in Korea today will make effective diplomacy with China more difficult, however. One notable difference is that there probably will not be a significant Sino-Soviet split for the United States to use as leverage in bargaining. It will have to seek other means of inducing China to accept US policy for the military outcome of another Korean war, such as economic or financial incentives.

The second difference is the presence of nuclear weapons in North Korea. Two of China's national aims listed by the US Institute for Peace are "avoiding a nuclearization of the region" and "limiting the military role of the United States in and around the Korean peninsula."<sup>106</sup> In view of these two aims, the United States should seek to convince China of the two nations' mutual interest in addressing the nuclear problem and the United States' ability to help resolve it if necessary. If the Chinese are intent on conducting their own military operations in North Korea to secure nuclear weapons and facilities, the United States should not risk a military conflict with China over the issue. It should either pursue agreements to deconflict PLA and US military actions in North Korea or allow other forces to conduct the operations. Once nuclear facilities are secure, it will be possible to bring in UN inspectors and members of the International Atomic Energy Agency to properly identify and dispose of weapons and material inside them.

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<sup>106</sup> Bates Gill, *China's North Korea Policy*, Special Report (Washington, D.C: United States Institute for Peace, July 2011), [www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org), 4.



China may be more willing to accept ROK terms for peace on the peninsula once these steps have been carried out.

Finally, there is the difference in US objectives between the Vietnam War at its conclusion and a potential Korean conflict. Instead of peace with honor as in Vietnam, the United States may choose to pursue regime change in North Korea or at least foster the conditions for it once the KPA is disabled. If regime change means uniting Korea under a democratic government, China may express greater opposition to US military action in North Korea than in Vietnam. As discussed already, it may be necessary in the interest for peaceful relations with China for the United States to allow other nations' forces to conduct operations north of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel.

If the ROK military is to conduct operations into North Korea—either to secure nuclear facilities or to defeat and disable the KPA—it will need the support of UN forces. UN participation in Iraq and Afghanistan suggests, however, that even if the UN Security Council agrees to confront the DPRK militarily, the majority of the resource burden in another Korean conflict may still fall on US and ROK forces.<sup>107</sup> In this case, it will be difficult for the United States to avoid sending members of its own military to accompany UN troops. If those forces are operating under the UN banner, a conflict with China is less likely than if US action is unilateral.

Maintaining a positive relationship with China is also important for the postwar period, when the PRC and other regional players may seek a voice in the settlement of the conflict. If the United States and China are able to resolve the nuclear issue and the missions of their respective military forces amicably, China may be more willing to accept a multilateral postwar settlement for the peninsula or one under the auspices of the UN.

Postwar settlement issues in which China and the United States are likely to play a role include the fate of the KPA and the character of the post-unification Korean armed forces. If the UN has participated in the conflict, the former issue will probably be resolved under its auspices. Within the UN framework, the United States, China, and Korea should seek a policy for disarming the KPA that quickly eliminates them as a threat but ensures they are treated humanely and have opportunities for future

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<sup>107</sup> Huh, "Azimuth Check," 49.

employment. The occurrence of armed conflict will probably preclude them from serving in a unified Korean military. The earlier discussions on the aftermath of a North Korean collapse offer other options for them to work, however. A united Korea may seek to bring some former KPA leadership to trial for crimes such as the North Korean shelling of Yeonpyeong Island and the torpedo attack against the ROK ship *Cheonan*. China's former patronage of North Korea may motivate it to intervene politically in such matters, but it may be less likely to do so if it perceives that a unified Korea is stabilizing internally. If the United States succeeds in maintaining a dialogue with China throughout the post-war period, it will also be able to influence Beijing's stance on the matter so that it respects Korea's sovereignty.

The character of a Korean armed forces following unification will also elicit interest from Korea's neighbors because of those forces' effect on the regional balance of power. As this chapter has already discussed, a future unified Korea is likely to lean toward China in a regional crisis, and its military will follow suit. Considering the negative effect this outcome will have on the security of Japan, it will behoove the United States to maintain a military presence on the peninsula long after Korean unification. This presence will give the United States continued leverage in its relationship with China and allow the American military to sustain a solid partnership with a unified Korean armed forces. As the following discussion will show, the failure of the US-South Vietnam military partnership offers lessons for how to keep the US-ROK alliance strong and the ROK military robust if a conflict breaks out on the Korean peninsula.

**The Unification of Vietnam: Lessons for the US-ROK Alliance.** As in South Vietnam, the United States has stationed forces in South Korea to support a government that faces a Communist foe bent on its domination. Furthermore, that foe has a degree of military and economic support from a patron outside its borders. Yet the two countries have had entirely different destinies. In the face of domestic pressure to end an unpopular war in Vietnam, the United States withdrew its military support. Within just over two years of the departure of the last US combat troops, the South Vietnamese government and its military caved to northern aggression and became a bastion of Communism in the region. In contrast, 28,500 US armed forces still guard against a North Korean invasion, and the peninsula remains divided.

The split Korea of today illustrates how Vietnam might have turned out differently if the United States had remained committed to using military power to defend the South. An ARVN veteran implied this outcome in 2001 when he was interviewed, exclaiming “America is still in South Korea. Why are you not still in South Vietnam?”<sup>108</sup> Although the different political, economic, and cultural dynamics in Korea and Vietnam make such counterfactuals dubious, both sides in the Second Indochina War understood the significance of the United States’ contribution. Part of North Vietnam’s strategy to defeat the South was to create conditions under which America would leave, and South Vietnam’s President Thieu campaigned for US support almost continuously until his resignation.<sup>109</sup> Perhaps he understood better than many how poorly prepared the ARVN was to stand on its own—one assertion that Chapter 4 makes.

In view of the loss of South Vietnam, there are two primary lessons for the US-ROK alliance if a war were to break out with the DPRK. First, the United States must remain committed to its promise to fight alongside the South Koreans. Second, the ROK must ensure its military is robust enough to lead operations on the peninsula.

Regarding the first lesson, the United States must take a long view toward the alliance that draws upon its history, its present purpose, and its value for the future of Korea and the region. Leaders must convey these concepts to a Congress and an American public that is casualty-averse and increasingly skeptical of foreign military intervention in the aftermath of conflict in the Middle East. Today’s malaise is similar to that following the Vietnam conflict, when Americans were left “baffled and ambivalent about their role in the world.”<sup>110</sup> It is important not to become baffled and ambivalent about the US role in Korea, however.

Taking a long view of the US-ROK alliance first means promoting an understanding of the sacrifices made in Korea during the first Korean War. Although this war generated the alliance, the conflict is often called “The Forgotten War” because of its brevity and its occurrence between World War II and the Vietnam War. It may also be possible that the war’s conclusion at the same place it began—the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel—makes it

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<sup>108</sup> Andrew A. Wiest, *Vietnam’s Forgotten Army: Heroism and Betrayal in the ARVN* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 296.

<sup>109</sup> Wiest, *Vietnam’s Forgotten Army*, 63-4, 83, 120, 221, 225-6, 229.

<sup>110</sup> Karnow, *Vietnam, a History*, 15.

inconspicuous in US history. It behooves the United States to ensure the American public do not forget the sacrifices made by its military to liberate South Korea from its invaders, however. Such reminders are not to create a perception of sunk costs—Vietnam showed that huge costs without much to show for them are perceived as a waste—but rather to reinforce the value of a free Korea for which Americans fought.

Similarly, the United States should remind both Koreans and Americans of the alliance's present purpose. This task is challenging because “the confluence of internal and external transitions is pushing the two countries together and pulling them apart at the same time.”<sup>111</sup> Considering that Koreans, Americans, and other affected players such as Japan are less worried about the threat of Communism today than the hazard to regional stability that the DPRK poses, it makes sense to frame the alliance in regional terms.

The two powers have already made this change at the political level. In a series of meetings with in 2002, Washington and Seoul agreed to “adapt the alliance to the new century's strategic relationship” and promote not just security on the peninsula, but regional security as well.<sup>112</sup> This broader interpretation of the alliance ensures that if a war were to break out with North Korea, the United States would view its responsibility to support Korea in regional terms. Contrary to some expectations, this shift did not result in a debate between the powers over US commitment to the Mutual Defense Treaty that undergirded the alliance. Rather, most South Korean political leaders agreed that the US-Korea alliance should take on a regional role.<sup>113</sup>

The regional outlook is significant for the future of the alliance because it extends the alliance's time horizon beyond a possible war with North Korea to its aftermath and US roles in the push towards unification. As this study has already touched upon, the greatest sources of assistance in manpower, money, and expertise as Korea attempts to transform the North into a productive contributor to the state will help determine what direction it leans politically. Within a regionally-focused US-ROK alliance, the United

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<sup>111</sup> Charles M. Perry et al., *Alliance Diversification and the Future of the US-Korean Security Relationship* (Everett, MA: Merrill/Daniels Press, 2004), 30.

<sup>112</sup> Chae-jöng Sö, *Power, Interest, and Identity in Military Alliances* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 199-201.

<sup>113</sup> Sö, *Power, Interest, and Identity in Military Alliances*, 202-3.

States is in a more legitimate position to assist Korea and ensure its continued partnership after unification.

The military piece of this assistance is clearly important both during and after a war on the peninsula, and Vietnam is a reminder that domestic support for such assistance depends on the perception that the other half of an alliance is a willing and able partner. Although the United States intervened in Vietnam out of a desire to protect the Southeast Asian region from the encroachment of Communism, the loss of 58,000 American lives in Vietnam with little to show for it after a decade of fighting lost the support of the US public. One reason for these outcomes was the over-dependency of the ARVN on the United States and its failure to prosecute the war on its own.

Herein lies the second lesson for the alliance. Although the United States should guarantee strong, enduring military support to the ROK armed forces in the event of a war on the peninsula, those forces must also be robust enough to successfully lead wartime operations on the peninsula. This capability is essential for two reasons. First, a robust ROK capability will help ensure the conflict ends quickly, minimizing the loss of ROK and US lives. Second, a fully capable ROK military will increase morale and give South Korea more ownership of an eventual unification of the peninsula.

South Korea's phenomenal economic growth and advancements in military equipment and technology in the last few decades suggest that it is well on the way to an independent, robust capability in the face of North Korean threats. Although the scope of this study prevents a comprehensive analysis of the state's military capabilities, it is evident that South Korea possesses "a thoroughly modern military arsenal."<sup>114</sup>

However, the inability of South Korea to anticipate the North Korean shelling of Yeonpyeong Island and its muted response to the torpedo attack against the *Cheonan* suggest that its military needs to develop a more comprehensive security posture. In its 2012 White Paper, the South Korean Ministry of National Defense has identified this need and has set forth three policies to address it. These policies are "maintaining an immediate and resolute retaliation posture against enemy provocations, developing an elite and combat-oriented military, and improving the working conditions for service

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<sup>114</sup> Hickey, *The Armies of East Asia*, 171; Hackett and International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2013*, 271.

members.”<sup>115</sup> While the first two policies entail reforms in the organization, training, and education of frontline forces, the third emphasizes the support functions that allow those forces to focus on their jobs. The effectiveness of these policies will become more evident once the United States transfers wartime operational control to the ROK, currently scheduled for December 2015.<sup>116</sup>

Aside from these practical reforms, the robustness of the ROK military in the face of a North Korean threat will also depend on a more intangible quality: the ability to carry a cohesive narrative that unites the ROK behind its military and presents a credible defense against North Korea. Unlike South Vietnam, South Korea possesses a competent democratic government that has the respect of most of the population. Two dangers still dampen the effectiveness of the ROK’s military posture, however. One danger is popular ignorance of the North Korean threat as memories of the Korean War fade from memory and the ROK continues its march of economic prosperity. That the RVN had a more productive economy than its northern neighbor and still suffered a resounding military defeat should serve as a warning (see the Appendix for economic comparisons).

Although North Korea regularly reminds the world of its harmful intentions through military actions and rhetoric, some in the younger generation blame the North’s provocations on US presence on the peninsula.<sup>117</sup> It is imperative that the ROK consistently remind its people of the alliance’s role in national security. The United States can contribute to this narrative through USFK public affairs efforts that emphasize US interest in the continued prosperity of South Korea.

The other danger for the ROK is failing to maintain a steady political policy towards North Korea in the face of threats. “Because South Korea’s military policy is tied to the government policy toward North Korea, it has been restrained from conducting a consistent policy to defend the Republic of Korea’s territory and people.”<sup>118</sup> Wavering between accommodation and confrontation has characterized South Korea’s political policy over the last couple decades, leading many within the country to question its identity relative to its neighbor. In turn, military preparedness may suffer from ambiguity

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<sup>115</sup> “Defense White Paper,” 44.

<sup>116</sup> “Defense White Paper,” 44-47, 2.

<sup>117</sup> Based on the author’s experiences in the country in 2012

<sup>118</sup> Bae, “ROK Military Policy Recommendations toward North Korea,” 6.



on this issue. The identity crisis contrasts with North Korea, whose identity has changed little since the country's inception.<sup>119</sup> The result of this distinction is to make North Korean military policy more consistent and likely strengthen the country's support for its military forces. Granted, much of this support is forced or is influenced by deceptive government propaganda about the nature of South Korea. However, a consistent political policy has also given North Korea a more cohesive narrative by which to recruit, train, and organize its forces. South Korea's policy toward the North should not be static, but neither should it change with every political administration. Instead, it should present a consistent, united front to the DPRK in the face of its military threats and rhetoric.

If such a front exists and Koreans view the military as highly capable, there are short-term and long-term benefits for the character of Korea's armed forces. In the short term, morale will improve and Koreans will be less likely to try and avoid the draft that so many currently view as an impediment to their future job success. More Koreans will also be likely to continue their service. Both effects would be a boon to Korea's armed forces, considering that low birthrates are shrinking the size of the state's future manpower pool.<sup>120</sup>

In the long term, a robust military will be able to take more ownership for the peninsula's unification if an armed conflict breaks out. This ownership will enhance unit pride and heritage in the aftermath of the conflict, and it will earn the military greater respect among the native population. This is the outcome that many Americans and South Vietnamese may have once imagined for the ARVN; it is still achievable for the Republic of Korea's armed forces.

### **Lessons from Austria and Hong Kong: If Not for Korea, Then for Whom?**

Drawing lessons from Austria in 1955 and Hong Kong in 1997 for the military outcome of Korean unification is difficult because a divided Korea is different from both cases in the features that most affect that outcome. Austria's division was entirely due to ten years of foreign occupation, while Korea's has endured for several decades on its own. Hong Kong's history as a foreign-governed territory for 156 years and the absence of

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<sup>119</sup> Bae, "ROK Military Policy Recommendations toward North Korea," 7.

<sup>120</sup> Huh, "Azimuth Check: An Analysis of Military Transformation in the Republic of Korea—Is It Sufficient?", 17.



military conflict with China during that period also make its unification very different from what Korea would experience.

Austria and Korea do have two geopolitical similarities: They both occupy a central location in their respective regions, and both are surrounded by more powerful neighbors. These commonalities beg the question of whether Korea might be able to follow Austria's path to neutrality following unification.

There are two shortcomings with this proposal, however. First, even if a united Korea were to significantly downsize its combined forces of 1.8 million active duty personnel, it would still present a considerable regional threat. Japan would aim to bolster its military capabilities against this threat, and "China could not guarantee a neutral unified Korea."<sup>121</sup> Second, even if Korea's armed forces shrink by several hundred thousand, the neutral option overlooks regional history. China, Japan, and Russia have disputed Korea for well over 100 years, so a neutrality policy would not be a successful long-term solution.<sup>122</sup>

One unification principle that North Korea has promoted in the past is a confederation government that gives equal representation to Koreans from the North, South, and overseas locations.<sup>123</sup> Neutrality is more viable for Korea with this type of government because it is less likely to be able to field a powerful, cohesive military. However, South Korea's enduring strategy for a more complete political and cultural unification is not compatible with this principle, and there is some doubt that North Korea would carry it out.

Perhaps the most tenable comparison between Hong Kong's reversion to China and a unified Korea is between the character of the city-state today and that of Pyongyang under a democratic national government centered in Seoul. Such a scenario imagines a mix of market forces, democracy, and socialist influence similar to what exists in Hong Kong today. One challenge of the comparison, however, is that political trends in the two cases may head in opposite directions. It is possible that Hong Kong

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<sup>121</sup> Burke R. Hamilton, "Northeast Asian Regional Power Security Issues of Korean Unification" (Air Command and Staff College, 2004), 19.

<sup>122</sup> John E. Betts, "Should US Military Forces Remain in Korea After Unification?" (National Defense University, 1993), 19-20.

<sup>123</sup> Ryoo, "The ROK Army's Role When North Korea Collapses Without a War with the ROK," 23.

will increasingly come under the domination of socialist China while Pyongyang experiences a gradual transformation to democracy. The accuracy of such predictions rest largely on the interplay of economic change, political transformation, and culture in the two cities.

If Austria and Hong Kong offer few lessons for Korean unification, are there other potential cases to which they are more relevant? For Austria, the probable answer is “no” because of the unique combination of generating and sustaining conditions for Austria’s division. The generating conditions were its collapse following a world war and its occupation by two of the war’s victors. The sustaining condition was the souring of relations between those victors. The probability of these conditions coalescing in one country in the future is highly unlikely.

Nevertheless, the maxim often attributed to Mark Twain that history does not repeat itself but does rhyme suggests that broader themes such as the unification of an occupied country and the event’s military outcomes continue to play out across the globe. The attempts of the United States and its allies to form cohesive states out of Iraq and Afghanistan are recent examples, although any lessons from Austria are still limited because the greatest divisions in these latter two countries come from within rather than from without. In other words, the occupying powers in both Iraq and Afghanistan generally agree on what a government in each country should look like; ethnic groups and tribes within each country’s borders cannot. Perhaps the best lesson that Austria can offer in these cases is how to put aside regional differences to develop a cohesive government and military. Just as the United States desired for these institutions to be strong in Austria so it could hedge against Soviet domination, in Iraq and Afghanistan a unified government and a respectable military would keep the states from being havens for terrorism.

With the possible exception of Macao and some other colonial possessions that have been released back to a “mother country,” Hong Kong is unique in modern times for the conditions under which it reverted to China. Nevertheless, the incorporation of a territory into a culturally similar state is common in history, as revealed by three categories. First, some territories may move back and forth between one government and another. This category describes Alsace-Lorraine (see the Appendix) and

Schleswig-Holstein on the French-German and Danish-German borders, respectively. Second, territories have sometimes coalesced into modern states through a succession of integrations. This phenomenon describes the unification of Italy (also in the Appendix) and Germany in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Finally, the integration of new provinces or states continues to take place as more powerful countries buck norms of sovereignty and use similar culture as an excuse to pry territories from weaker neighbors. Recent Russian provocations into Crimea and eastern Ukraine testify to this claim.

In looking for potential future unification cases that are most like the incorporation of Hong Kong, however, the most obvious one is Taiwan. The island is majority Chinese, having received Chinese immigrants in large numbers since 1683.<sup>124</sup> Ever since the flight of nationalist Chinese forces to Taiwan in 1949, Beijing has viewed the island as a “renegade province.”<sup>125</sup> The PRC has traditionally believed that it will recover Taiwan by force if necessary, but public commitments in recent decades to a “peaceful unification” and guarantees of autonomy for the island suggest that Beijing envisions a template for reversion similar to Hong Kong’s.<sup>126</sup> This template reflects other similarities between Taiwan and Hong Kong, such as economic prosperity and a democratically elected government.<sup>127</sup> Regardless, in the minds of Chinese leaders the reversion of the island is a matter of *when*, not *if*. Former Chinese President Jiang Zemin emphasized that “the reassertion of Chinese sovereignty over Hong Kong is but one step on the road to complete national reunification. In 1999, Beijing’s attention will turn to Macao and then to the real prize, Taiwan.”<sup>128</sup>

Of particular interest to this study are the fate of Taiwan’s military in the event of the island’s incorporation back into China and the effect of the event on the PLA. What factors will drive China’s decisions concerning these outcomes? If Taiwan becomes a SAR, it is unlikely that the PLA will absorb any of the Taiwanese armed forces. However, will Taiwan’s forces continue to have a defense role on the island, or will PLA

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<sup>124</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 110.

<sup>125</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 258.

<sup>126</sup> Miller, *Becoming Asia*, 255-6.

<sup>127</sup> “Taiwan Timeline: Path to Democracy,” *British Broadcasting Corporation*, 2005, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/static/in\\_depth/asia\\_pacific/2000/taiwan\\_elections2000/1986\\_1999.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/static/in_depth/asia_pacific/2000/taiwan_elections2000/1986_1999.stm).

<sup>128</sup> Warren I. Cohen and Li Zhao, eds., *Hong Kong under Chinese Rule: The Economic and Political Implications of Reversion* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 191.

units take over the responsibility? How should the United States seek to influence these decisions, if at all? These are a few of the questions to address in a future study.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter explored the potential unification of Korea and its military outcomes within the multivariable framework used for the previous chapters' unification cases. It examined the external and domestic factors (the independent variables) that may affect the fate of the North Korean People's Army and influence the character of a post-unification military (the dependent variables). It set forth four scenarios for the future of the Korean peninsula: status quo, gradual reform, collapse, and war. The chapter then returned to the four previous case studies to determine if any of them are similar enough in their independent variables to Korea's in a particular scenario to offer predictions for the dependent variables.

Based on comparisons between the four historical cases and potential Korean scenarios, it is evident that German unification is most similar to either a reform or collapse unification scenario in Korea. Because German unification was peaceful and rapid in spite of being somewhat unexpected, most of the lessons it offers for the Korean case are positive. At the international level, these lessons include the value of proactive dialogue, both between the Korea and regional players, and among regional players; the need for an enduring US presence in Northeast Asia; incorporation of the outcome for Korea's post-unification armed forces into discussions on regional security architecture; and the need to restructure those forces to better contribute to the post-unification regional security environment. Lessons at the domestic (inter-Korean) level include the recommendation to integrate at least some former KPA personnel into a unified Korean armed forces; the need for a period of transition that shapes KPA veterans for service in those forces; careful but timely decision-making regarding the handling of KPA facilities; and the need to understand the relation of the KPA to its government and North Korean society when attempting to disband or disarm units and restore security.

On the other hand, the unification of Vietnam offers the most pertinent lessons for the Korean case if a war breaks out on the peninsula. Although such a war should be prevented, continued threats from North Korea suggest it may still happen. If it does,

lessons from Vietnam concerning the US-China relationship and the US-ROK alliance suggest ways the ROK and the United States can achieve victory quickly and foster a continued close relationship with Korea and its armed forces after unification.

Because the Vietnam War did not escalate into combat with the Chinese, the US-China lessons are positive. The first lesson is the need to coordinate certain military actions against North Korea with diplomatic visits to China, and the second is the necessity of maintaining an open dialogue with China that emphasizes the common interests of both countries in the stability of the peninsula.

Considering that the Vietnam War resulted in the departure of US assistance at an inopportune time and the defeat of the ARVN only two years later, lessons for the US-ROK alliance on the Korean peninsula are negative. The first lesson is that both countries should take a long-term view of the alliance that encompasses its history, present purpose, and scope for the future. This vision looks beyond US assistance in a Korean War to the ability of the alliance to shape a unified Korea and ensure stability for the region. The second lesson is that the ROK should continue to push for a robust military that can lead wartime operations on the peninsula if necessary. A fully capable Korean partner will help achieve a quicker joint victory in an armed conflict, thus minimizing casualties. It will also improve military morale and give Korea a greater sense of ownership in its own unification, with implications for the pride and heritage of a post-unification Korean armed forces and the respect of the Korean public. A robust military for the ROK will depend on a cohesive narrative favorable to military strength and a consistent political policy toward North Korea.

### **Conclusion**

The recommendations of this chapter for an outcome favorable to South Korea and the United States in any of the scenarios leading to a unified Korea reflect the conclusions of earlier chapters on the significance of military forces in creating an image of the unified state for its citizens and its neighbors. As the introduction posited, the military member is historically the means by which a state comes into being, states theoretically claim a monopoly on legitimate violence, and militaries project a national image both externally and internally. From these assertions, it makes sense that dominant

states in each historical unification case investigated for this study used their military to project an image that was conducive to external and internal norms of stability and security. These norms, which in turn depended on the external and domestic factors discussed in this study, drove the way in which they dealt with the minor state's military and shaped the unified state's armed forces. They will likewise drive how South Korea confronts the KPA and builds its armed forces after unification.

In view of this study's analysis, the military outcomes of national unification reflect both a state's efforts to adapt to constraints in the external and internal environments and to shape those environments for the future. National image is central to these efforts. In the case of Germany, a regional security structure and the drive for unity between the societies of East and West constrained the employment of the military as a tool of force and made it primarily a symbol for unity during unification. The result for a unified Germany was an image of inclusion and cooperation, with the post-unification military being an expression of both. This image fostered unity within Germany, but it also furthered the collective security of Europe.

On the other hand, the lack of a robust regional security structure in Southeast Asia and North Vietnam's perceived need to liberate the South and usher in a Communist revolution resulted in a state and a military that valued the role of force in creating an image of a unified Vietnam. In contrast to Germany, that image was exclusionary and self-reliant, and it fostered the climate of suspicion that encouraged China to invade the country in 1979.

Austria's effort to unify after World War Two was constrained primarily by external factors, and it realized that its weak position amid the geopolitics of the Cold War made neutrality the best means of unification. It recruited, trained, and organized its military forces to reinforce the neutral image. Although these military forces contributed little to regional security, they helped shape Austria internally by remaining largely apolitical—a contrast to the Austrian armed forces of the previous few decades. In this sense, Austria projected an image to its citizens that was inclusionary and cooperative.

When China assimilated Hong Kong, it adapted to external constraints on the use of force by agreeing to a peaceful entry of the PLA into the city-state. It sought a balance between projecting its authority into the territory and fostering an environment in which



Hong Kong could continue to prosper economically. The manner of the PLA's takeover—a ceremonial stationing of forces in the city-state—relegated the PLA largely to a symbol of the state, but it was less an instrument of unity than in Germany's case, considering that the PLA did not assimilate any former Hong Kong Chinese garrison forces into its ranks and remained largely isolated from the local population.

The tendency of dominant sides in unification to use their militaries for creating images in response to constraints at the international and domestic levels while seeking to shape environments at those levels is also likely to characterize South Korea if the peninsula unifies. The scenario under which unification unfolds, however, will affect those constraints. If gradual reform or a North Korean collapse precedes Korean unification, South Korea will more easily be able to convey an image similar to Germany's, both to the region and North Korea. Through the ROK alliance, the United States is in a position to assist with that effort, and it should do so out of the two countries' shared interest in security in Northeast Asia and stability on the peninsula. These goals will be more difficult than in Europe and Germany, respectively, because the region lacks a robust security structure and the peninsula has a history of active conflict. Nevertheless, shaping a post-unification Korean military for regional security roles and encouraging the assimilation of at least some former KPA members into that military will create an image of inclusion and cooperation. For both Korea and the United States, this image will help foster regional security and stability within the unified state.

If North Korea takes the road of the North Vietnamese and forces South Korea and its allies into a war, the ROK will be forced to adopt an image of exclusion, at least in the short term. The reason is that past a certain threshold, KPA forces will go from being provocateurs to active belligerents, requiring South Korea to employ its military as an instrument of force and making the assimilation of any KPA members into a post-unification military impossible.

Unlike South Vietnam, however, the ROK can expect to receive assistance from the United States and cooperation from other countries that value a democratic Korea and a unified peninsula in the long term. The former idea will face challenges from China, and the latter idea will be a harder sell for Japan, but the projection of an image of cooperation from Korea as it shapes its post-unification military will help diffuse



concerns. As a country that maintains alliances with both countries, the United States is in a unique position to foster that image—even if inter-Korean conflict precedes unification.

The conclusions of this study leave open future investigations of national unification along three branches. The first branch of study might look at the impact of material factors on the military outcomes of historical unifications and estimate how those factors might contribute to military outcomes in the aforementioned Korea unification scenarios. This study mostly covered the effects of non-material factors, one exception being the impact of economic growth and the possession of advanced technology on the strength of the ROK military. A worthwhile future study might examine these impacts in more depth, focusing on relative economic power and technological innovation.

A second branch that might grow out of the first is an examination of the potential impacts of both material and non-material factors on military outcomes in other possible unification cases, such as China-Taiwan or the reversion of former Soviet territories back into the Russian fold. Such studies will further broaden conclusions about military outcomes while offering suggestions for US policy in other regions where unifications may take place.

A third branch, rather separate from the first two, is to study other outcomes of national unification in their own right. Rather than being a dependent variable in the study of military outcomes, for example, economy or culture becomes an independent variable that is dependent on external and domestic constraints. Such a study will form a more complete picture of the unification of a country such as Korea, again with implications for US policy.

## Appendix:

### Cases of Unification in Modern History

Description Case	number & type of territories	circumstances of separation	Relative population/GDP/ GNP (if available)	relative size of unifying territories	Occasion/means of unification
Post-Civil War United States, 1865	two independent entities (Union & Confederate States of America)	11 states seceded from the Union to form the CSA; civil war ensued	<u>Union:</u> 18.9 million (1860) <u>CSA:</u> 5.5 million, not including slaves (1860) <sup>i</sup>	<u>Union:</u> 1,050,160 sq mi <u>CSA:</u> 757,870 sq mi <sup>ii</sup>	immediate post-conflict: Union military victory over the CSA
Italy, 1815-1870	13-14 independent states	Italy had not been united as a political entity since the fall of the Roman Empire 13 centuries before. <sup>iii</sup>	The population ranged from 500,000 in the state of Parma to seven million in Naples Total: 25.9 million (1870) <sup>iv</sup>	unknown; total size was comparable to modern Italy (116,324 sq mi) <sup>v</sup>	multiple post-conflict: beginning with the union of Sardinia and the Piedmont, Italy instigated four wars to unify the state <sup>vi</sup>
Poland, 1918-1921	three territories, each belonging to a different European power	Prussia, Austria, and Russia had carved up the former Poland between 1772 and 1795. <sup>vii</sup>	unknown; total population: 12,247,600 (1917) <sup>viii</sup>	unknown; total Area: 49,018 sq mi <sup>ix</sup>	gradual post-conflict: Poland emerged out of the “disintegration of the Austrian, Russian, and German empires” following World War I, though it engaged in several small wars before solidifying its territory. <sup>x</sup>
France and Alsace-Lorraine, 1919, 1945	state (France) and border region with Germany	1 <sup>st</sup> : Germany had acquired Alsace-Lorraine after the Franco-Prussian War 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Germany reacquired it during World War II <sup>xi</sup>	<u>France:</u> 39,601,509 (1916) <u>Alsace-Lorraine:</u> 1,874,014 (1916) <sup>xii</sup>	<u>France:</u> 207,054 sq mi <u>Alsace-Lorraine:</u> 5,604 sq mi <sup>xiii</sup>	post-conflict, twice: Germany returned the region to France after World Wars I and II.

Description Case	number & type of territories	circumstances of separation	Relative population/GD P/ GNP (if available)	relative size of unifying territories	Occasion/means of unification
Austria, 1955	four occupied zones of the country; effectively two political strongholds	Britain, France, United States, and Soviet Union occupied Austria after World War II and failed to agree on conditions of independence.	Total Population: 6,949,000 (1952) <sup>xiv</sup>	Total Area: 32,369 sq mi <sup>xv</sup>	delayed post- conflict: Soviet Union decoupled Austria from issue of Germany's unification; Austria agreed to be neutral post- independence
Somalia, 1960	two former colonial territories	Somalia and Somaliland were territories of Italy and Britain, respectively	<u>Somalia:</u> 1.25 million (1965) <sup>xvi</sup> <u>Somaliland:</u> 650,000 (1958) <sup>xvii</sup>	<u>Somalia:</u> 193,000 sq mi <sup>xviii</sup> <u>Somaliland:</u> 68,000 sq mi <sup>xix</sup>	gradual post conflict: former colonial powers agreed to independence following WWII; UN oversaw democratic elections in 1960
Vietnam, 1975	two divided states: the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) in the South and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) in the North	Dividing line between the two sides coincided with French colonial divisions, but superpower rivalry and US containment policy reinforced it.	<u>North Vietnam:</u> 21,600,000 (1971) <u>South Vietnam:</u> 19,299,000 (1971) <sup>xx</sup>	<u>North Vietnam:</u> 61,290 sq mi <u>South Vietnam:</u> 64,948 sq mi <sup>xxi</sup>	immediate post- conflict: North Vietnamese military victory over South Vietnam
Yemen, 1990	two imperial territories, later two modern states (Yemen Arab Republic & People's Democratic Republic of Yemen)	South Yemen was under British empire, then became Marxist state; North Yemen was under Ottoman empire, then became a republic <sup>xxii</sup>	<u>North Yemen (YAR):</u> 11 million (1990) <sup>xxiii</sup> <u>South Yemen (DPRY):</u> 2.5 million (1990) <sup>xxiv</sup>	<u>North Yemen (YAR):</u> 75,000 sq mi <u>South Yemen (DPRY):</u> 112,000 sq mi <sup>xxv</sup>	political agreement; both sides agree to equal representation of the two former states in a common Yemeni Parliament and election of a new leader. <sup>xxvi</sup>
Germany, 1990	two modern states (German Democratic Republic in the East and the Federal Republic of Germany in the West)	Britain, France, United States, and Soviet Union occupied it after World War II; unresolved disputes with Soviet Union led to the creation of two states.	<u>West Germany:</u> 60,110,000 (1988) <u>East Germany:</u> 16,736,000 (1988) <sup>xxvii</sup>	<u>West Germany:</u> 95,975 sq mi <u>East Germany:</u> 41,768 sq mi <sup>xxviii</sup>	post-Cold War: political agreement and peaceful West German takeover of East Germany

Description Case	number & type of territories	circumstances of separation	Relative population/GDP/ GNP (if available)	relative size of unifying territories	Occasion/means of unification
China-Hong Kong, 1997	modern state and British colonial territory	Britain acquired Hong Kong as a concession of the Opium Wars (1841-2)	<u>China:</u> 1,210,004,956 (1996) <u>Hong Kong:</u> 6,300,000 (1996) <sup>xxxix</sup>	<u>China:</u> 3,696,000 sq mi <sup>xxx</sup> <u>Hong Kong</u> (island plus surrounding British holdings): 415 sq mi <sup>xxxi</sup>	conclusion of contract: political agreement ended 99-year Chinese loan to Britain; Hong Kong became a Special Administrative Region of China
China- Macao, 1999	modern state and Portuguese colonial territory	Portugal settled Macao in 1557. <sup>xxxii</sup>	<u>China:</u> 1,210,004,956 (1996) <sup>xxxiii</sup> <u>Macao:</u> 429, 152 (1998) <sup>xxxiv</sup>	<u>China:</u> 3,696,000 sq mi <sup>xxxv</sup> <u>Macao:</u> 6 sq mi <sup>xxxvi</sup>	conclusion of contract: political agreement ceded Macao back to China as a Special Administrative Region. <sup>xxxvii</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Oxford History of the American People* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 615.

<sup>ii</sup> National Geographic Society (U.S.), *National Geographic Family Reference Atlas of the World* (Washington, D.C: National Geographic, 2002), 88-103.

<sup>iii</sup> Bamber Gascoigne, "History of Italy," *History World*, from 2001, ongoing;  
<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?groupid=2693&HistoryID=ac52&track=pthc>

<sup>iv</sup> Orjan Martinsson, "Tacitus Historical Atlas," n.d., <http://www.tacitus.nu/historical-atlas/population/italy.htm>.

<sup>v</sup> National Geographic Society (U.S.), *National Geographic Family Reference Atlas of the World*, 136.

<sup>vi</sup> Frank J. Coppa, *The Origins of the Italian Wars of Independence*, *Origins of Modern Wars* (London ; New York: Longman, 1992), 1.

<sup>vii</sup> Barraclough, *The Times Concise Atlas of World History*, 79.

<sup>viii</sup> Thos Spivey, ed., *The World Almanac and Encyclopedia*, 1917 (New York: The Press Publishing Company, 1916), 532.

<sup>ix</sup> Spivey, *The World Almanac and Encyclopedia*, 1917, 532.

<sup>x</sup> Mieczysław B. Biskupski, *The History of Poland*, *The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2000), 60, 66.

<sup>xi</sup> "Alsace-Lorraine."

<sup>xii</sup> Spivey, *The World Almanac and Encyclopedia*, 1917, 532.

<sup>xiii</sup> Spivey, *The World Almanac and Encyclopedia*, 1917, 532.

<sup>xiv</sup> Harry Hansen, ed., *The World Almanac and Book of Facts for 1955* (New York: New York World-Telegram, 1955), 335.

<sup>xv</sup> Hansen, ed., *The World Almanac and Book of Facts for 1955*, 335

<sup>xvi</sup> Gilbert Ware, "Somalia: From Trust Territory to Nation," *Pylon* 26, no. 2 (Quarter 1965), 174.

<sup>xvii</sup> Bernard Braine, "The Somali Question," *African Affairs* 57, no. 228 (July 1958), 190.

<sup>xviii</sup> Ware, "Somalia: From Trust Territory to Nation," *Pylon* 26, no. 2 (Quarter 1965), 174.

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- <sup>xix</sup> Harry Hansen, ed., *World Almanac and Book of Facts for 1959* (New York: New York World-Telegram, 1959), 334.
- <sup>xx</sup> George Delury, ed., *The 1974 World Almanac and Book of Facts* (New York: Newspaper Enterprise Association, 1973), 615-6.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Delury, ed., *The 1974 World Almanac and Book of Facts*, 615-6.
- <sup>xxii</sup> Dresch, *A History of Modern Yemen*, 1.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Dresch, *A History of Modern Yemen*, 186.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Dresch, *A History of Modern Yemen*, 186.
- <sup>xxv</sup> Elliot, "Political Unification in the Arab World: Yemen--A Case Study," 35, 38.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Kamil A. Mahdi, Anna Würth, and Helen Lackner, eds., *Yemen into the Twenty-First Century: Continuity and Change*, 1st ed (Reading, UK: Ithaca Press, 2007), xvii-xx.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Mark Hoffman, ed., *The World Almanac and Book of Facts for 1989* (New York: Pharos Books, 1988), 676-7.
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Hoffman, *The World Almanac and Book of Facts for 1989*, 676-7.
- <sup>xxix</sup> Robert Famighetti, ed., *The World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1997* (Mahwah, New Jersey: K-III Reference Corporation, 1997), 753.
- <sup>xxx</sup> Famighetti, ed., *The World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1997*, 753
- <sup>xxxi</sup> Famighetti, *The World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1997*, 831.
- <sup>xxxii</sup> Bruce A. Elleman, *Modern China: Continuity and Change 1644 to the Present* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2010), 85.
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> Famighetti, ed., *The World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1997*, 753
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> Robert Famighetti, ed., *The World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1999* (Mahwah, New Jersey: PRIMEDIA Reference, Inc., 1998), 835.
- <sup>xxxv</sup> Famighetti, ed., *The World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1997*, 753
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> Famighetti, *The World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1999*, 835.
- <sup>xxxvii</sup> "Macao," *The CIA World Fact Book*, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mc.html>.

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